

CHAPTER 2 - ALTERNATIVES

Introduction

This EIS explores the differences among a number of management alternatives for the Wasatch-Cache National Forest. These were developed to provide a range of options for the direction that forest management will take over the next 10 to 15 years. These alternatives are responsive to the needs for change ('Topics'), significant issues discussed in Chapter 1, and public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. However, given that some of the issues are highly polarized, no one alternative fully resolves all of them. Showing a range of approaches for addressing issues, along with differences, trade-offs, and projected effects is a key part of the environmental analysis process. This chapter is divided into the following sections:

- **Alternative Development** – discusses how the alternatives were developed.
- **Elements Common to All Alternatives** – describes features that are part of every alternative considered in detail.
- **Alternatives Considered in Detail** – describes the alternatives analyzed in depth.
- **Alternatives Considered But Eliminated From Detailed Study** – briefly describes alternatives that were considered, but not studied in detail and reasons why.
- **Comparison of Alternatives** – summarizes how the alternatives compare to one another.
- **The Preferred Alternative** – identifies the alternative currently preferred by the Responsible Official for implementation.

IMPORTANT: Maps of Management Prescriptions, Recreation Opportunities (Summer and Winter) and Scenery Management **for each Alternative** are included in the map packet accompanying this document. These maps are essential to understanding each of the Alternatives.

Alternative Development

Range of Alternatives

As explained in Chapter 1, revision of the forest plan is based on the need to change the 1985 forest plan. The September 1999 "Proposed Action Wasatch-Cache National Forest Plan Revision" provided people with a first cut of what the Forest Service approach to revision might look like. Based on public responses to that proposal, the six issues detailed in Chapter 1 were identified. These, along with mapping and themes compiled from later public workshops formed the basis for a number of alternative approaches to address needs for change and issues in forest plan revision. Where possible, we identified specific geographic areas where each issue was most prevalent. This helped narrow the potential range of alternatives in some cases. We then

identified the outer ranges (maximum and minimum treatment) of potential alternatives for each issue, noting reasons for narrowing the range where that was appropriate. For example, although one end of the range of suggested options for ensuring biodiversity was to reintroduce historically native predators (while the other is the minimum of mitigating activities where threatened or endangered species are known to occur), we narrowed the range because reintroduction is not typically initiated by the Forest Service nor is it implementable by the Forest Service. Scope of current policy does not include this action. Instead, we used only actions that are within Forest Service authority to implement as the end of the range of options for biodiversity.

Public Review of Alternatives *Prior to the DEIS*

Five “Preliminary Alternatives” were then described in writing and provided to forest plan revision participants in August 2000. Each alternative was designed to respond to comments and significant issues in a different way, providing a range of possible management approaches from which to choose. Responses to this package were then compiled and used to further define, clarify, and improve the five alternatives as well as to add a sixth alternative completing the National Forest Management Act requirement that “The interdisciplinary team shall formulate a broad range of reasonable alternatives...” 36CFR 219.12(f).

Primary changes resulting from public comments on the Preliminary Alternatives included: adding more area as recommended wilderness to some alternatives; further restricting snowmobile access in some alternatives while adding snowmobile access in others; adding Special Interest Areas and/or Special Areas to some alternatives; protecting more inventoried roadless areas in some alternatives; allowing no timber harvest in one alternative; applying the National Roadless Area Conservation Rule to some alternatives and not to others; providing for more separation of winter recreation uses in some alternatives; adding emphasis on fuel management to some alternatives; rearrangement of permitted heli-ski areas in some alternatives; and adding recreation access as an emphasis in some alternatives in addition to Alternative 5.

Public Review of Alternatives *Included in the DEIS*

Six Alternatives were presented for public review and comment in the May 2001 Draft Environmental Impact Statement. These represented the range of reasonable alternatives developed with multiple rounds of public participation. Alternative 6 was identified as the Preferred Alternative. The comment period ended November 1, 2002 and we received 3,762 separate responses. Public comment specifically on Alternatives included many expressions of support for or opposition to each of the six alternatives. Some respondents felt that a wider range of alternatives should be considered. In particular some wanted to see more wilderness recommendation than the maximum in Alternative 1, a no grazing alternative, a wider variation in projected grazing outputs (AUMs), more variation in summer motorized access, specific areas of winter non-motorized access, and numerous other very specific variations on the six Alternatives presented.

The FEIS responds to these comments by changing several suggested roadless areas in the Ogden area to recommended wilderness in Alternative 1. The FEIS decreases suitable range (and consequent projected AUMs) for purposes of cutthroat trout habitat improvement in Alternative 2. All other aspects of the six DEIS alternatives remain the same. The reasons for not varying summer motorized access by alternative are explained in a subsequent section of this Chapter titled “Past Decisions Not Being Revisited in Plan Revision” under the subheading “Travel Management Plans” as well as in the last section of this Chapter “Alternatives Considered But Eliminated From Detailed Study”. Reasons for not analyzing a no grazing alternative are also explained there.

An additional alternative, **Alternative 7**, was developed by modifying the original preferred alternative with careful consideration of the public comments and suggestions about the six draft Alternatives, and considering information on effects displayed in this FEIS. Among other changes from the original preferred alternative, Alternative 7 responds to the concerns for some separation of winter motorized and non-motorized uses to reduce conflicts as well as concerns about unsatisfactory rangeland conditions.

Application of the 2002 National Roadless Area Conservation Rule

A note about the current status of and how we have addressed the National Roadless Area Conservation Rule in this FEIS is warranted. At the point of fully developing our alternatives for the *DEIS* analysis, the process of public comment on the Rule was still in progress. By the time we were identifying and finalizing the *DRAFT* preferred alternative, previous Forest Service Chief Michael Dombeck issued a Record of Decision on the Roadless Area Conservation Initiative. Even at that time, there were several legal challenges being initiated. We ultimately applied the Rule to Alternatives 1, 2, and 6 in the DEIS.

This rule was subsequently selected for review by President Bush’s Administration until at least May 12, 2001. In December 2001 Interim Direction was provided in the Forest Service Manual (FSM 1925.04a, id_1920-2001-1) to guide various activities affected by the Rule including Forest Planning. This direction reserved authority for certain decisions (roading and timber harvest) within roadless areas to the Chief of the Forest Service “until a forest-scale roads analysis is completed and incorporated into the forest plan” and “until a revision of a forest plan or adoption of a plan amendment that has considered the protection and management of inventoried roadless areas.”

Therefore, Alternative 7, developed in response to public comment on the DEIS Alternatives 1-6, applies this direction rather than the Rule. This Alternative relies on the individual roadless area evaluation (FEIS Appendix C2) as the basis for applying management prescriptions to roadless areas. Many of the areas have prescriptions that maintain roadless values completely or mostly while some have prescriptions that allow development (see Chapter 4, Topic 5, under the heading “Effects on Roadless Area Values”).

Assumptions About Budgets and Funding

Finally, alternative development was based on assumptions about budgets and funding. One of the learning experiences from the original forest planning efforts was that although plans should describe desired future conditions of the forest, they also must have some connection to reality. In many cases the plans projected outputs and accomplishments that could only have been achieved if funding was significantly increased in various resource program areas. These funding increases did not materialize and in many cases funding actually decreased over the years. Since the plans did not establish clear priorities within or between resource areas, implementation necessarily was sporadic for some resources while others with funding became the priority by default. Achieving balance was difficult.

Therefore, all alternatives (including the new Alternative 7) developed for this analysis are based on “experienced budget levels.” The total budget allocation to the Wasatch-Cache National Forest was assumed to be similar to the average of several recent years. The mix of different types of funds (such as wildlife, recreation, or minerals) could be adjusted depending on the nature of the alternative but the total was viewed as a cap. There is one exception to this in the area of fire funding. Given the recent emphasis on fire and fuels in the National Fire Plan, we assumed that funding in this area will be significantly higher than experienced budget levels for other resources. Projections about activities related to fire and fuels reduction therefore are based on these higher funding levels. In the event that Congress emphasizes other programs through appropriations in the future, regardless of the alternative being implemented, a redistribution of priorities might result.

Also see the explanation of assumptions for projected activities and outputs in Table 2-2.

Elements Common to All Alternatives

Past Decisions Not Being Revisited in Plan Revision

Travel Management Plans have been developed for each ranger district or group of districts. These plans identify routes open for summer motorized use and areas or routes open for winter motorized use. Although this forest plan revision addresses winter motorized and non-motorized uses, the designated routes open for summer motorized use remain in place consistent with current Travel Plans for all alternatives. The single exception to this is when the motorized route is located within an inventoried roadless area that is recommended for wilderness designation (Prescription 1.5), in which case that route would be closed to motorized use. These are highlighted in the alternative descriptions in this Chapter beginning under the heading “Alternatives Considered in Detail.”

Public comments and discussions after review and comment on the DEIS revealed needs for updating some District Travel Plans, particularly Ogden, Salt Lake, and Logan Ranger Districts. Given this need, an Objective was developed and included in the Revised Forest Plan to complete this work in the near future. Changes resulting from these site-specific Travel Planning analyses may require Forest Plan amendment, particularly if they affect Recreation Opportunity

Class mapping. This is an expected and appropriate type of adaptation of the Plan to changes in the future.

All alternatives also have in common **Utility Corridors and Electronic Sites**. The utility corridors and electronic sites identified in the 1985 forest plan remain as defined. They are to be treated as an overlay to the Management Prescriptions and integrated as much as possible with the prescription emphasis while providing for use of the corridor or site. (Direction for specific sites is included in Management Area Desired Future Conditions in the Revised Forest Plan).

The **1996 Rangeland Health Amendment** established forage and browse utilization standards, and ground cover standards as well as rangeland monitoring requirements. This forest plan amendment also described broad desired future conditions for four vegetation types: riparian, upland, aspen, and alpine. These items are retained in all alternatives and are incorporated into the Revised Forest Plan.

Based on public comment on the DEIS, several items have been added to the Revised Forest Plan to improve on the guidance developed in 1996. These include a Guideline for upland forage utilization on lands in unsatisfactory condition (G71), a Guideline for site-specific objective development (G75), and an Objective for Improved Rangeland Management.

The **1994 Oil and Gas Leasing** decision included leasing stipulations for 140,400 acres of the North Slope of the Uinta Mountains and is retained in all alternatives for forest plan revision. Existing leases (on about 19,000 acres) in the inventoried roadless area (“appeal settlement zone”, see Topic 9 in Chapter 3) continue as they exist now until they expire at which time the record of decision for this plan revision will take effect for future availability and lease stipulations.

The **1997 High Uintas Wilderness Amendment** established desired future conditions, goals, standards and guidelines for that Wilderness area. These are incorporated in all alternatives and are included in the Proposed Forest Plan.

In response to public comment, some of the direction for the High Uintas, where we felt it was appropriate, has been applied to other designated wildernesses in the Revised Forest Plan to improve protection and management of those areas.

The **1999 Goshawk Amendment** provided desired future conditions, goals, objectives, standards and guidelines for sustaining habitats for goshawk. The intent of these has been incorporated in the Revised Forest Plan and applies to all alternatives.

The **2001 Utah Fire Amendment** amended all of the Forest Plans for the Utah National Forests to allow for prescribed fire and wildland fire use. Components of this amendment are incorporated in all alternatives except Alternative 1 (which does not allow prescribed fire) with one exception. Sensitive watersheds are removed from the list of exceptions to wildland fire use because these watersheds may include barriers to fire spread that could be used as acceptable wildland fire use perimeters. We will analyze sites specifically to determine whether to include portions of sensitive watersheds in areas approved for wildland fire use.

Comments on the DEIS expressed concern about needed **motorized** access under permit to administer various on-going uses (such as weather stations, reservoir/ditch maintenance, and livestock grazing operations). In response a Guideline has been added to the Revised Forest Plan to incorporate authorization for these types of access into permits where public motorized access may not be allowed.

Common Framework for Alternatives Considered in Detail

Before reviewing the seven Alternatives for this FEIS, a quick review of how they will be described is necessary. To understand any one of the alternatives the reviewer must look at a series of maps as well as written descriptions.

Management Areas are the same delineation of seven groupings of watersheds across the forest for each alternative. They are described narratively and shown on a map in the introductory section of Chapter 3 of this FEIS. They include Bear, Cache-Box Elder, North Wasatch-Ogden Valley, Central Wasatch, Stansbury, Western Uintas, and Eastern Uintas. Management Areas are the place where forestwide direction must be integrated with the capabilities and sensitivities of the land, as well as the needs and opportunities there. These areas are places recognizable by people that use and are interested in the area.

Forest Management Direction:

The National Forest Management Act requires us to develop management direction for each National Forest. This “direction” is to be expressed through goals, objectives, standards, guidelines, management prescriptions, desired future conditions, and monitoring and evaluation requirements for the forest. Some direction logically can be applied to an entire national forest, while other direction should apply only to specific areas of the forest. For this reason, **maps** are used with this FEIS to show where particular direction would apply by alternative. Management prescriptions, recreation opportunities (summer and winter), scenery management, and oil and gas leasing availability are mapped for each alternative analyzed in detail. These maps, along with the narrative descriptions later in this Chapter (under “Alternatives Considered in Detail”), are the basis for describing the key choices made in each alternative and displaying important differences between the alternatives.

The set of maps for each alternative are best understood by first reviewing the standardized categories and descriptions that go with each map legend. **FEIS Appendix D** provides detailed descriptions of the categories. Following are very abbreviated versions of these descriptions to introduce the concepts used in mapping. Management Prescriptions define the primary land allocation with the other three maps further defining direction for a given land area. In most instances the map layers are compatible by design. However, in the instance of a conflict between direction for a Management Prescription and any of the other layers, the Management Prescription takes precedence.

The maps and their accompanying descriptions for the selected Alternative (7) are a key part of the Revised Forest Plan.

Management Prescription Categories

The **Management Prescription Categories** listed below (Appendix D for detailed descriptions) provide a sense of the management or treatment of the land that is intended to result in a particular condition being achieved or value(s) maintained. The category numbers below correspond to the numbers on the **Management Prescription Maps** for each of the seven alternatives. However, prescription categories do not stand alone. They are one part of a management direction that also includes Desired Future Conditions, Goals, Objectives, Standards, Guidelines, and Monitoring and Evaluation Requirements. Where an activity is allowed by Prescription, standards and guidelines provide specific parameters within which the activity must be managed.

1.0 Wilderness

- 1.1 Existing Wilderness - Opportunity Class I
- 1.2 Existing Wilderness - Opportunity Class II
- 1.3 Existing Wilderness - Opportunity Class III
- 1.4 Existing Wilderness - No Class
- 1.5 Recommended Wilderness

2.0 Special Management Areas

- 2.1-2.3 Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers (not used on revision maps)
- 2.4 Research Natural Areas
- 2.5 Scenic Byways
- 2.6 Undeveloped Areas
- 2.7 Special Interest Areas and Special Areas

3.0 Protection, Maintenance or Restoration of Aquatic/Watershed or Terrestrial Integrity

- 3.1 Aquatic Habitat/Watershed Emphasis (A - Aquatic, W - Watershed, **Alt. 7 only**)
- 3.2 Terrestrial Habitat Emphasis (D - Development allowed, U - Undeveloped, **Alt. 7 only**)

4.0 Multiple Resource Uses With Recreation Needs and Opportunities

- 4.1 Emphasis on Backcountry non-motorized recreation settings
- 4.2 Emphasis on Dispersed non-motorized recreation settings
- 4.3 Emphasis on Backcountry Motorized recreation settings
- 4.4 Emphasis on Dispersed Motorized recreation settings
- 4.5 Emphasis on Developed Recreation Areas

5.0 Multiple Resource Uses With Forested Vegetation Management Needs and Opportunities

- 5.1 Emphasis on maintaining or restoring forested ecosystem integrity while meeting multiple resource objectives
- 5.2 Emphasis on managing timber for growth and yield while maintaining or restoring forested ecosystem integrity

6.0 Multiple Resource Uses With Rangeland Vegetation Management Needs and Opportunities

- 6.1 Emphasis on maintaining or restoring non-forested ecosystem integrity while meeting multiple resource objectives
- 6.2 Emphasis on managing for livestock forage production while maintaining or restoring non-forested ecosystem integrity

7.0 Intermingled Public/Private Lands *(This prescription accompanied one of the other prescriptions in earlier versions. It has been eliminated because it made maps difficult to read and because private lands are already shown clearly on the maps.)*

8.0 Concentrated Development Areas

- 8.1 Mineral Development Emphasis

Allowed Activities by Management Prescription

For each alternative described later in this Chapter, a list of Management Prescriptions and Allowed Activities is provided accompanied by a series of tables. These show eight types of forest management activities and whether or not each would be allowed in the areas mapped with that prescription for that alternative. The following explanations should be referenced for better understanding of the allowed activities.

Allowed Activities Explanations

Timber Harvest refers to commercial removal of vegetation for a variety of purposes including providing raw wood materials, improving wildlife habitat, adjusting age class distribution to mimic historic disturbance regimes, providing fire-resistant landscapes and commercial thinning. Timber harvest may be used to salvage trees or stands substantially damaged by wind, fire, or other significant disturbance; reduce susceptibility to insects and disease; or to develop stand structures that meet the desired future conditions, provided this can be done in harmony with the management emphasis for the area.

Vegetation/Fuel Treatment refers to a host of activities including, thinning; seeding; planting; mechanical treatments such as cutting by hand with chainsaws; cutting using tracked equipment or equipment on wheels for roller-chopping, chaining, crushing, or chipping; chemical application; and biological treatments (i.e., specialized grazing regimes). These are methods used to achieve a broad range of multiple-use objectives including maintaining or restoring healthy ecosystems, reducing likelihood of unwanted wildfire, removing public safety hazards, reducing potential for high-intensity wildfires and resulting erosion, improving forage or browse production, restoring native plant communities, improving or restoring watersheds, and providing for specific elements of terrestrial or aquatic wildlife habitats.

Prescribed Fire refers to any fire ignited by management actions to meet specific objectives. A written, approved prescribed fire plan must exist, and site-specific NEPA analysis requirements must be met prior to ignition. Prescribed fire plans are documents prepared by qualified

personnel, approved by the agency administrator, and include criteria for the conditions under which the fire will be conducted (a prescription). Prescribed fire activities include actually lighting a fire using a fire accelerant with ground or aviation equipment and personnel; and may include the following: removal or piling of vegetation to secure perimeter lines, clearing areas for helicopter operations, clearing holding lines to bare mineral soil using hand tools or heavy equipment (i.e., bull dozers), using fire resistant foam or water on holding lines, constructing temporary camps for base operations, using aviation resources for fire retardant or water drops to reduce high-intensity fire behavior, closing areas to livestock grazing before and after burning, and closing roads and areas to the public before and after burning.

Wildland Fire Use is the management of naturally ignited wildland fires to accomplish specific pre-stated resource management objectives in predefined geographic areas outlined in the Fire Management Plan. The term does not include fires that are human-caused (either accidental or arson) and are considered unwanted wildland fires and that must be suppressed. It also does not include the use of those fires that are management ignited, referred to as prescribed fires. Use of wildland fire requires a Wildland Fire Implementation Plan which is a progressively developed assessment and operational management plan that documents the analysis and selection of strategies and describes the appropriate management response for a wildland fire being managed for resource benefits.

Road Construction refers to activity that results in the addition of forest classified or temporary road miles. **Road** is defined as a motor vehicle travelway over 50 inches wide, unless designated and managed as a trail. A road may be classified, unclassified, or temporary (FSM 7705).

Note: Where road construction is not allowed by a Management Prescription the responsible official may authorize road construction or reconstruction when:

- a. A road is needed to protect public health and safety in cases of an imminent threat of flood, fire, or other catastrophic event, that without intervention would cause the loss of life or property;
- b. A road is needed to conduct a response action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) or to conduct a natural restoration action under CERCLA, section 3d11 of the Clean Water Act, or Oil Pollution Act;
- c. A road is needed pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided by statute or treaty; or
- d. Realignment is needed to prevent irreparable resource damage by a classified road. The road must be deemed essential for public or private access, natural resource management, or public health and safety, and the resource damage associated with the road cannot be corrected by maintenance.

New Trail Construction refers to development of any “pathway for foot, horse, or trail vehicles” (bikes, scooters, snomobiles, and all terrain vehicles [motorized OHV 50” or less] (FSM 2305.05, WO Amendment 2300-94-3, 7/8/94, pg. 8-9 and FSH 2309.18 WO Amendment 2309.18-91-2, 11/8/91 pg. 1-2). To determine whether a trail is open to motorized or mechanized uses refer to District Travel Management Plans.

Note: In Prescriptions where new trail construction is not allowed, reconstruction and/or realignment to correct resource impacts from existing trails is allowed.

Grazing refers to eating of forage by permitted livestock managed under an approved Allotment Management Plan and terms of a livestock grazing permit. Forestwide and management prescription standards and guidelines provide direction for grazing management until site-specific desired conditions and/or objectives can be developed. Grazing may also include use of livestock under contract to reduce fuels.

New Recreation Development refers to major structural public use facilities such as campgrounds and trailheads. It does not refer to construction within already established developed recreation sites. Trails and single restrooms are not considered recreation development for these descriptions.

Changes to Prescriptions Between Draft and Final

Comments on the DEIS expressed concerns about the real intent behind some of the management prescriptions and their “Generally Allowed Activities”. There was confusion about whether the word “generally” would in essence negate the intent of stating that an activity was not allowed. The word generally has been removed from all allowed activities tables. The Allowed Activities Explanations above have been improved to distinguish between different types of vegetation treatments. In addition, new trail construction has been added to both the explanations and tables for each alternative.

There were also questions about conditions that might be placed on some activities because of the emphasis in the prescriptions. Given the need for better clarity during future implementation, the Revised Forest Plan replaces the allowed activities tables with corresponding standards and guidelines better reflecting intent for allowed activities in each management prescription (see Revised Forest Plan, Chapter 4A.5).

Finally, for Alternative 7 only, several new subcategories of prescriptions have been added to address comments and to adapt to evolving roadless area management direction. In Alternative 7 only, 3.1 is subdivided into Aquatic Habitat (3.1A) and Watershed Emphasis (3.1W) and 3.2 is subdivided into Terrestrial Habitat Emphasis Undeveloped (3.2U) and Developed (3.2D).

In addition, for Alternative 7 only, the prescription for recommended wilderness (1.5) allows two activities for interim management not allowed in other alternatives under this prescription. These are 1) prescribed fire to return fire dependent vegetation types to properly functioning conditions, and 2) existing snowmobiling until such time as Congress acts, to balance needs for closing other areas.

Recreation Opportunities Summer

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is a system of inventory and mapping of different types of recreation settings. These range along a scale from least developed (facilities, etc.) and most remote to most developed and least remote. Listed below is a brief explanation of the eight classes applied to each alternative in this analysis. Maps in the accompanying map packets show these recreation allocations for summer and how they vary by alternative. It is important to recognize that these maps are NOT Travel Management Maps and do not show which routes are designated as open to motorized uses. A ROS Class of motorized may be the result of motorized routes nearby but off National Forest and influencing the recreation setting on National Forest. FEIS Appendix D provides a more detailed description of the classes and FEIS Appendix B includes a discussion on how the system was applied to the analysis.

Wilderness/Primitive

Designated Wilderness; very high probability of solitude; closeness to nature; self-reliance, high challenge and risk; little evidence of people; Natural Evolving Landscape Character Theme.

Wilderness/Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized

Designated Wilderness; high probability of solitude; closeness to nature; self-reliance high and moderately high challenge and risk; some evidence of others; Natural Evolving Landscape Character Theme.

Recommended Wilderness/Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized

Recommended Wilderness; high probability of solitude; closeness to nature; self-reliance high and moderately high challenge and risk; some evidence of others; Natural Evolving Landscape Character Theme.

Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized

High probability of solitude; closeness to nature; self-reliance; high to moderate challenge and risk; some evidence of others; Natural Appearing Landscape Character Theme.

Semi-Primitive Motorized

Moderate probability of solitude; closeness to nature; high degree of challenge and risk using motorized equipment; evidence of motorized equipment on trails and primitive roads, and by audible motor sounds; Natural Appearing Landscape Character Theme.

Roaded Natural

Moderate evidence of human sights and sounds; moderate concentration of users at campsites; little challenge or risk; Natural Appearing and Developed Natural Appearing Landscape Character Themes.

Rural

Opportunity to be with people is accepted and desirable as is facility convenience, little challenge or risk except for activities like downhill skiing; high interaction among users; Developed Natural Appearing and Resorts Natural Setting Landscape Character Theme.

Urban

Opportunity to be with others is very desirable as is facility convenience; challenge and risk are unimportant except for competitive sports, high interaction among people; Resorts Natural Setting/Water Recreation Rural Appearing Landscape Character Theme.

Changes to ROS Application Between Draft and Final and Relationship to Travel Planning

Comments on the DEIS raised questions about how ROS mapping was intended to be used in the future when Travel Management Plans are updated. People wanted to know whether a mapped ROS Class such as Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized would preclude consideration of additional motorized routes in that area, for example to develop a loop between existing motorized routes. Likewise, people asked if an area is mapped as Semi-Primitive Motorized because of an existing motorized trail, would that trail be precluded from consideration for closure and return to non-motorized status because of the ROS Class? These excellent questions resulted in re-examination of how ROS was to be used and what its relationship is to Travel Management Planning. Our conclusion was this: ROS Maps will provide direction for managing recreation settings *until such time that Travel Management Plans are updated through site-specific analysis*. As Travel Plans are updated, that analysis can include alternatives that would require amendment of the Forest Plan ROS Maps. In other words, *ROS Mapping necessarily follows Travel Management Plan updates*, rather than preceding them or precluding certain changes to them. This ensures that a range of options can be considered at the site-specific level, which is the appropriate scale for decision making on designated open travel routes.

Winter Recreation Classes

Four classes were defined for allocating areas to winter recreation. These are very similar to the classes listed above for summer, but with several of the classes combined for simplicity. These are **Wilderness, Non-Motorized, Motorized, and Heliski**. These winter allocations are shown on maps (available in accompanying map packets), and vary by alternative. (See Appendix D for detailed descriptions of the Winter Recreation classes.)

Scenery Management System (SMS)

The Scenery Management System (SMS) is an inventory and classification system for identifying landscape character themes and setting objectives for management of scenery. Listed below is a brief explanation of six “landscape character themes”. These were assigned to the various areas of the forest by alternative. “Scenic integrity” is simply a qualitative measure of how well the landscape matches its character theme. High integrity means that given the character theme, for example “natural appearing”, management actions, such as facility

construction or vegetation treatment, should not result in obvious deviations from the expected appearance. Low integrity on the other hand would allow for some significant deviations from the expected appearance. Integrity objectives are assigned to areas of land on maps in the accompanying map packets. These vary by alternative primarily based on management prescriptions. FEIS Appendix D provides a more detailed description of the Scenery Management System and FEIS Appendix B includes a discussion on how the system was applied to the analysis.

Natural Evolving Landscape Character Theme

The natural evolving landscape character originates primarily from natural disturbances and succession of plants, with subtle changes due to indirect human activities. The existing landscape character generally continues to change gradually over time through natural processes.

Natural Appearing Landscape Character Theme

The existing landscape character has been influenced by both direct and indirect human activities, but appears natural to the majority of viewers. Natural elements such as native trees, shrubs, grasses, forbs, rock outcrops and streams or lakes dominate the views. While there is evidence of human influence from historic use, campgrounds, small organization camps, rustic structures and management activity, it would appear to be part of the landscape to the majority of viewers.

Developed Natural Appearing Landscape Character Theme

This landscape character theme is characteristic of National, National Forest and State scenic byways with development, and developed and dispersed recreation facilities within the foreground of the viewshed (1/2 mile). In these areas, the roadway, recreation amenities, and development are anticipated features in the landscape. For users these amenities are part of the valued natural appearing landscape. Users of these amenities are attracted to the natural appearing landscape, but desire a moderate to easy interaction with the landscape through the use of these amenities.

Resort Natural Setting Landscape Character Theme

This landscape character theme is characteristic of developed recreation facilities such as ski resorts, and recreation resort communities. In these areas recreation amenities are the main attraction for people and why they come to an area. Facilities are designed and constructed to harmonize with the natural setting, rather than to contrast with that setting. While the facilities in the base areas are dominant, that dominance declines as it transitions onto the mountainsides up to the ridgelines. Likewise, recreational opportunities provided in base areas rely more heavily on constructed facilities, while those higher on the mountain become increasingly oriented toward the natural setting.

Water Recreation Rural Appearing Landscape Character Theme

This theme is characteristic of the Pineview Reservoir recreation complex. The scenic qualities of Ogden Valley attract visitors, and maintaining rural character is important to many landowners in this area. In these areas recreation amenities are the main attraction for people and why they come to an area. The cultural setting of farms, fields, and pastures, influences

development on the private lands, housing, businesses, roads and other developments, [dominate some views].

Natural Landscape Character Theme (Alternative 4 only)

The natural landscape character originates primarily from natural disturbances and succession of plants, with subtle changes due to indirect human activities. The existing landscape character generally continues to change gradually over time through natural processes. Each degree of change in integrity changes the integrity level. The degree of visual alteration is measured in terms of visual contrast with the surrounding natural landscape.

Alternatives Considered in Detail

There are two sections of information about the seven alternatives. First there are **Individual Alternative Descriptions**. After these descriptions, there are a series of tables that summarize key information for all alternatives allowing a quick **Comparison of Alternatives**, their similarities and differences.

Individual Alternative Descriptions:

Each alternative is presented in the same format with the following components.

- **Background/Theme** – explains the general aim and a brief overview of the alternative.
- **Response to Issues** – describes how the alternative addresses the significant issues described in Chapter 1. Issue 5- impacts of uses, is addressed in-depth within Chapter 3 of this FEIS, where the consequences of each alternative are displayed.
- **Alternative Acres by Prescription Category** – is a pie chart showing the relative amounts of each management prescription category in acres for that alternative.
- **Management Prescriptions and Allowed Activities** – displays tables showing Allowed Activities by prescription for each alternative. Alternatives 2, 3, and 6 show these allowed activities for within and outside of inventoried roadless areas whereas Alternatives 1, 4, 5, and 7 do not have different allowed activities inside or outside of inventoried roadless areas.
- **Maps** – of each alternative and the corresponding prescriptions, recreation opportunities and scenery objectives are included in the map packets accompanying this document. It may be helpful to open the maps and use them as a reference as you read the particular alternative description.

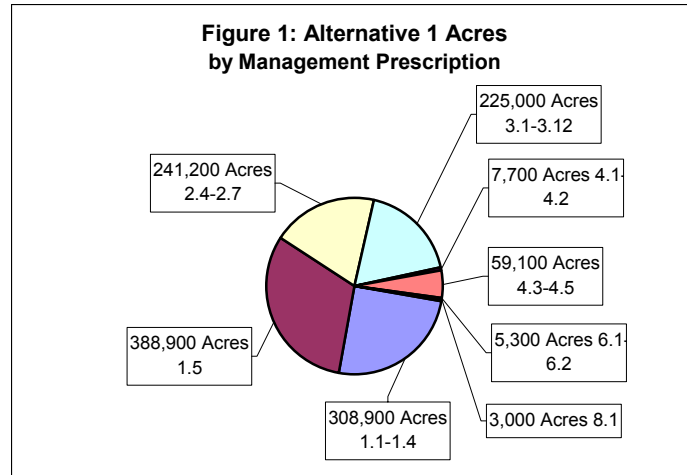
Comparison of Alternatives:

- **Tables** – are provided beginning on page 2-XX displaying key differences between alternatives for management prescriptions, projected activities and outputs, suitable lands, recreation opportunities, disposition of roadless areas, and revenues and payments to counties for each alternative.

Alternative 1

Background/Theme

Alternative 1 addresses concerns about a need for very strong emphasis on allowing nature to take its course, minimizing human interference with natural processes, maintenance of roadless landscapes, and restrictive approaches to sustainability forest-wide, given many unknowns. By “restrictive” we mean that human uses are only allowed when and where they are consistent with this emphasis. Current levels of development are maintained, but not increased. No timber harvest is allowed nor is any road construction or reconstruction in inventoried roadless areas. Specific activities needed to reduce impacts of existing development (for example realignment of eroding trails) are allowed. Expected commodity outputs compared with other alternatives are lower.



Recreation opportunities are managed to allow a diversity of settings consistent with Forestwide Goals for watershed health, biodiversity and species viability, and ecological status, benchmarks, and reference areas. Winter motorized use is more restricted than currently. Snowmobiling is not allowed in inventoried roadless areas and where special habitat needs are present. Snowmobile routes on roads that have been cherry stemmed into roadless areas are open. User densities are managed (potential permit systems) in ROS classes primitive and semiprimitive. This alternative maintains all areas that currently meet criteria for semiprimitive and primitive recreation opportunities.

Response to Issues

Alternative 1 addresses the issue of **recreation use conflicts and access management** consistent with priority placed on goals for watershed health, biodiversity and species viability, and protection of special areas. Motorized uses are restricted more than currently because no snowmobiling is allowed in recommended wilderness and inventoried roadless areas. Areas closed to winter motorized uses because of critical big game winter range total 222,800 acres or 18% of total Forest acres. Heli-skiing is not allowed because much of the suitable terrain is recommended as wilderness. Within inventoried roadless areas, summer motorized recreation is allowed on routes designated as open in current travel maps except within areas recommended as wilderness. In these areas, about 76 miles of trail and two miles of road currently open to motorized uses would be closed to motorized use and rehabilitated or returned to vegetation. Mapped semiprimitive and primitive ROS classes (both motorized and nonmotorized) would be managed (potential permit system) to maintain low user densities. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-4, 2-5 for comparisons of different recreation opportunities.*

Alternative 1 addresses the issue of inventoried **roadless area management** with a prohibition on road construction, reconstruction, and timber harvest that maintains 100 percent of inventoried roadless areas as undeveloped. Areas recommended for wilderness (prescription 1.5) are shown in dark green on the maps in the map packets. The majority of acres of roadless areas with high quality wilderness characteristics are recommended consistent with the view that these areas deserve wilderness designation to protect those values in perpetuity. Portions of several roadless areas in the Ogden Ranger District (Willard, Lewis Peak, Burch Creek, and Francis) were added to the recommended wilderness in this Alternative based on public comment. About 388,900 acres, or 64 percent of inventoried roadless acres are recommended for wilderness designation. Remaining inventoried roadless areas are managed according to the mapped prescription with allowed activities defined specifically for Alternative 1. Allowed activities are shown in tables following this narrative. *Also see Comparison of Alternatives Table 2-6.*

Alternative 1 addresses the issue of **ensuring biodiversity and species viability (including watershed functions)** by emphasizing natural processes with minimal human intervention as follows:

- a. Identify a system of areas representing all native ecological units and seral stages across their historic range of variation and allow nature to take its course.
- b. All known wildlife corridors protected (regionally significant Bear River and currently designated western portion of East Fork Smiths Fork Uinta Mountains).
- c. No interference with natural dynamics of vegetation including no timber harvest, no mechanical fuel reductions, no prescribed fire or unwarranted suppression of fire – (except that required to protect life and property). Allowing natural fires within prescription (wildland fire use) is acceptable and the natural role of insects and disease is allowed to play out.
- d. Manage livestock grazing (including eliminating or reducing where necessary) to restore proper functioning of watersheds, riparian areas, lands in unsatisfactory condition (i.e. not meeting objectives) and to maintain or restore biodiversity. Close all vacant allotments including 3 for bighorn sheep habitat.
- e. Manage recreation activities (including eliminating or reducing where necessary) to restore proper functioning of watersheds, riparian areas, and lands with recreation caused detrimental soil disturbance (this includes realignment of trails where needed).
- f. Maintain all inventoried roadless areas as undeveloped and minimize human interference/intrusion.
- g. Road decommissioning (closure, rehabilitation and revegetation) is pursued consistent with Travel Maps and priority placed on improving water quality, fish habitat, and reduction of habitat fragmentation.
- h. Maintain connectivity of unfragmented forested lands or restore connectivity with minimum human interference.
- i. Discourage introductions of non-native species.
- j. Allow only biological control or hand-removal of noxious weeds.
- k. Provide natural habitat protection for all species to include invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, neotropical migrants, and plants, as well as species identified as threatened, endangered, or sensitive.

- l. Protect and or restore special habitats (3 grazing allotments in the Uinta Mountains would be phased out from allotment status if permits are voluntarily waived without preference, to provide for bighorn sheep habitat).
- m. Existing Research Natural Areas are maintained (Mollens Hollow, Morris Creek, Red Butte). Realign the lower portion of Red Butte Research Natural Area making the lower part a Special Interest Area; include additional acreage with current Morris Creek RNA.
- n. Designate special interest areas in Willard Basin, and lower Logan Canyon for botanical values, and the T.W. Daniels Experimental Forest for educational purposes.

Alternative 1 addresses the issue of concerns about **economic contributions and social benefits of the forest** through recognizing non-commodity values such as water quality, air quality, natural ecological functions, and perpetuation of species along with commodity output measures of value. The land base is considered not suited for timber production and timber harvest is not allowed. Livestock grazing is managed on suitable rangelands, to meet standards associated with habitat needs. In both riparian and upland areas with unsatisfactory conditions, where movement of livestock or other non-structural means cannot accomplish satisfactory conditions (based on monitoring), livestock would be removed. Vacant allotments are removed from allotment status, including three that provide bighorn sheep habitat. Oil and gas leasing is limited to currently available lands (1994 Leasing Decision) with the remaining appeal settlement zone¹ not available for lease after current leases expire. Recreation related opportunities for economic benefits are tied to semiprimitive and primitive ROS classes (outfitter guiding may be included in management of user densities) and areas currently devoted to roaded natural and rural categories (concessions, ski areas). Ski area boundary expansions are not allowed nor are new ski areas. Commodity outputs are expected to be lower in this Alternative than in the others. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-2 and 2-7.*

Alternative 1 addresses the issue of **appropriate types and amounts of facility development** by allowing no additional facility development except to replace current facilities that have unacceptable impacts to resources and that do not increase user densities. No new trails are allowed, although realignment of existing trails to reduce resource impacts is allowed. Facilities at ski areas would be consistent with the Resort Natural Setting landscape character theme. ROS categories Urban and Rural are not expanded beyond current acres.

¹ About 68,300 acres being analyzed for oil and gas leasing within the Western and Eastern Uinta Mountains Management Areas are referred to as the Appeal Settlement Zone, see Chapter 3 Topic 9.

Management Prescriptions and Allowed Activities for Alternative 1

Prescription Category 1: Wilderness, Alternative 1

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire ²	Road Building	Grazing ¹	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
1.1-1.5	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

¹ As allowed under the 1984 Utah Wilderness Act

² Only to meet Wilderness Objectives

Prescription Category 2: Special Management Areas, Alternative 1

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
2.4	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
2.5	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.6	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.7	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No

Prescription Category 3: Aquatic/Watershed or Terrestrial Integrity, Alternative 1

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
3.1-3.2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

Prescription Category 4: Recreation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 1

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
4.1-4.4	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
4.5	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No

Prescription Category 5: Forested Vegetation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 1

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
5.1	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
5.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Prescription Category 6: Rangeland Vegetation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 1

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New</u> Rec Devel.	<u>New</u> Trail Constr.
6.1	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
6.2	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

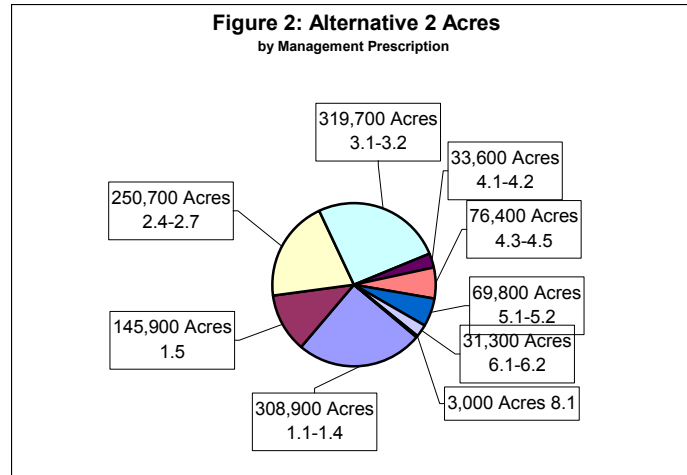
Prescription Category 8: Concentrated Development Areas, Alternative 1

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New</u> Rec Devel.	<u>New</u> Trail Constr.
8.1	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

Alternative 2

Background/Theme

Alternative 2 addresses concerns about a need for strong emphasis on biodiversity, mimicking or restoring natural processes with active human management, conservation of large roadless areas, and moderate approaches to sustainability given many unknowns. Uses are allowed when and where they are compatible with achieving restoration emphasis or maintaining properly functioning conditions. In inventoried roadless areas, no road construction or reconstruction is allowed and timber harvest is strictly limited consistent with the National Roadless Area Conservation Rule. Expected commodity outputs may be irregular in their timing with possible spikes of high and low outputs.



Recreation opportunities are managed to improve critical habitat, recover rare species, and where possible, provide for some increasing demands consistent with Forestwide Goals for watershed health, biodiversity and species viability, and ecological status, benchmarks, and reference areas. An overall diversity of recreation settings is maintained. Where inventoried roadless areas are recommended for wilderness or are next to existing wilderness, snowmobiling is not allowed. Snowmobile routes on roads that have been cherry stemmed into inventoried roadless areas are open. Within inventoried roadless areas, summer motorized recreation is allowed on routes designated as open in current Travel Maps except for those within areas recommended as wilderness. This alternative maintains 90 percent of currently mapped primitive and semi-primitive recreation opportunities.

Response to Issues

Alternative 2 addresses the issue of **recreation use conflicts and access management** by allowing winter motorized use in those areas where that use does not compromise existing and recommended wilderness. Conflicts between winter motorized and non-motorized uses are resolved through identification of most desirable snowmobiling and cross-country skiing areas, analysis of overlaps and determination of areas to separate these uses. These are overlaid with highest priority areas for protection/conservation and restricted accordingly. Areas closed to winter motorized uses because of critical big game winter range total 222,100 acres or 18% of total Forest acres. Heli-skiing is not allowed because much of the suitable terrain is recommended as wilderness. Within inventoried roadless areas, summer motorized recreation is allowed on routes designated as open in current Travel Maps except for those areas recommended as wilderness. In these areas, about eight miles of trail currently open to motorized uses would be closed to motorized use. Mapped semiprimitive and primitive ROS categories (both motorized and nonmotorized) are managed (potential permit system) to maintain

low user densities. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-4, 2-5 for acres of different recreation opportunities.*

Alternative 2 addresses the issue of **roadless area management** by adjusting allowed activities for management prescriptions with application of the National Roadless Area Conservation Rule. Road construction and reconstruction are not allowed in inventoried roadless areas nor is cutting, sale, and removal of timber except: for the cutting, sale or removal of generally small diameter trees which maintains or improves roadless characteristics *and* 1) to improve habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, or sensitive species, or 2) to maintain or restore ecosystem composition and structure, such as reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire effects. The only development allowed in inventoried roadless areas is for recreation facilities in prescriptions 4.4 and 4.5 (about 20,600 acres). About 145,900 acres or 24 percent of inventoried roadless areas with highest quality wilderness characteristics are recommended for wilderness. This is because of the need for active management of vegetation (primarily through use of prescribed fire that is not allowed in recommended wilderness) in order to return landscapes to properly functioning conditions in remaining roadless areas. *See Comparison of Alternatives Table 2-6 for disposition of roadless areas.*

Alternative 2 addresses the issue of **ensuring biodiversity and species viability (including watershed functions)** by emphasizing factors known to contribute to conservation biology with active human intervention as follows:

- a. Identify current or manage to create a system of areas representing all native ecological units and seral stages across their historic range of variation.
- b. All known wildlife corridors managed to maintain function of corridor (regionally significant Bear River and currently designated western portion of East Fork Smiths Fork Uinta Mountains).
- c. Manage and/or restore rangelands and manage livestock grazing (including eliminating or reducing where necessary) to restore proper functioning of watersheds, riparian areas, and lands in unsatisfactory condition. All vacant allotments are closed including 3 for bighorn sheep habitat. Remove 26,000 acres of watershed in unsatisfactory condition from rangeland suitability to improve cutthroat trout habitat.
- d. Active vegetation management (prescribed fire, wildland fire use, suppression of fire for protection of life and property, timber harvest, thinning, mechanical treatment of fuels, and seeding with native species) is emphasized to more quickly move landscapes to within the historic range of variability and to mimic natural disturbance processes including insects and disease.
- e. Maintain inventoried roadless areas as undeveloped.
- f. Road decommissioning is pursued as consistent with Travel Maps and priority placed on improving water quality, fish habitat, and reduction of habitat fragmentation.
- g. Take aggressive actions to eradicate noxious weeds.
- h. Maintain or restore connectivity of forested lands.
- i. Discourage introductions of non-native species.
- j. Monitor and assess for viability groups of species identified as focal species (categories of species used to assess ecological integrity).

- j. Protect and or restore special habitats (3 grazing allotments in the Uinta Mountains would be phased out from allotment status if permits are waived without preference, to provide for bighorn sheep habitat).
- k. Encourage restoration of native cutthroat trout to key drainages (Hayden Fork, Whitney, Temple Fork, Beaver Creek, Causey, South Fork Weber, Smith-Morehouse).
- l. Existing Research Natural Areas are maintained (Mollens Hollow, Morris Creek, Red Butte). Realign the lower portion of Red Butte Research Natural Area creating a Special Interest Area; include additional acreage with current Morris Creek RNA.
- m. Designate special interest areas and/or special areas in portions of the Wasatch Front Tri-canyon area for watershed, recreation and scenery purposes; and Willard Basin and lower Logan Canyon for botanical values.

Alternative 2 addresses the issue of concerns about **economic contributions and social benefits of the forest** through using opportunities for economic benefit from active management while focusing on objectives for biodiversity, species viability, and watershed health. Values for water quality, air quality, natural ecological functions, and perpetuation of species, as well as administrative and environmental costs of commodity outputs are recognized and included. Some forested lands are identified as suitable for timber harvest where that activity can be used to achieve habitat objectives and/or to mimic natural disturbance processes. Livestock grazing is managed on suitable rangelands to meet standards associated with habitat and watershed needs. In areas with unsatisfactory conditions, where movement of livestock or other structural means cannot accomplish satisfactory conditions (based on monitoring), livestock will be removed until satisfactory conditions are achieved. Vacant allotments are removed from allotment status. Lands recommended as wilderness within the appeal settlement zone in the Uinta Mountains are not available to lease for oil and gas development. The remaining portion of the Uinta Mountains inventoried roadless area in the appeal settlement zone is available for lease with no surface occupancy. Current leases covering portions of this area (see Chapter 3, Topic 9 for details) are not included in this decision. Recreation related opportunities for economic benefits are tied to the ROS classes. Ski area boundary expansions are not allowed nor are new ski areas. In general, outputs are dependent on consistency with achieving goals for biodiversity, species viability and watershed health. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-2 and 2-7 for activities and outputs.*

Alternative 2 addresses the issue of **appropriate types and amounts of facility development** by allowing very limited additional facility development. Replacement of current facilities that have unacceptable impacts to resources is allowed and some additional facilities to accommodate recreation as mapped in ROS classes. Facilities must be consistent with goals for biodiversity, species viability and watershed health. Trail construction is allowed consistent with management prescriptions and to the degree that it does not conflict with other goals. Facilities at ski areas would be consistent with the Resort Natural Setting landscape character theme.

Management Prescriptions and Allowed Activities Alternative 2

Prescription Category 1: Wilderness, Alternative 2

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing ¹	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
1.1-1.5	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

¹ As allowed under the 1984 Utah Wilderness Act

Prescription Category 2: Special Management Areas, Alternative 2

Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
2.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
2.5	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.6	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.7	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No

Outside Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
2.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
2.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.6	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No ¹
2.7	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes ¹

¹ Associated with resource interpretation and public use

Prescription Category 3: Aquatic/Watershed or Terrestrial Integrity, Alternative 2

Within Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
3.1-3.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

Outside Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
3.1	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹
3.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²

¹Trail construction allowed if consistent with riparian management objectives²Trail construction is allowed with consideration of existing trail densities**Prescription Category 4: Recreation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 2****Within Inventoried Roadless Areas:**

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
4.1	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.5	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Outside Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
4.1	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 5: Forested Vegetation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 2**Within Inventoried Roadless Areas:**

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
5.1-5.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

Outside Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
5.1-5.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 6: Rangeland Vegetation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 2

Within Inventoried Roadless areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
6.1-6.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

Outside Inventoried Roadless areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
6.1-6.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

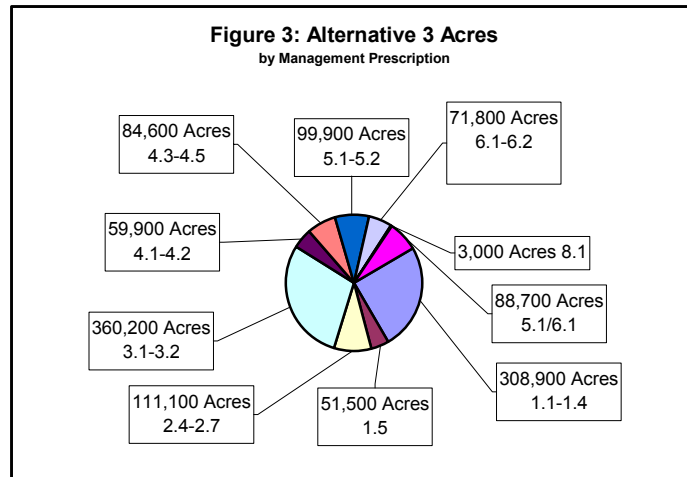
Prescription Category 8: Concentrated Development Areas, Alternative 2

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
8.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

Alternative 3

Background/Theme

Alternative 3 was originally developed as the “Proposed Action” for Forest Plan revision and was provided for public comment in September, 1999 and again as part of the five Preliminary Alternatives provided in September 2000. Public comment suggested that increased access for recreation did not necessarily belong only in Alternative 5 with increases in commodity uses even though those uses could inherently increase access through road building. We modified Alternative 3 from earlier versions to provide increased recreation access in response to increasing demands, especially for winter motorized use.



Alternative 3 provides a mix of uses and protection/restoration activities. It incorporates results of monitoring, project analyses and area assessments with some aspects of evolving policy such as the National Roadless Area Conservation Rule, although it does not apply this rule in its entirety. This alternative emphasizes adjusting management activities to ensure emphasis on ecosystem functioning and sustainability while providing some commodity outputs and a variety of recreation opportunities.

Response to Issues

Alternative 3 addresses the issue of **recreation use conflicts and access management** by increasing the amount of area open for snowmobiling over that currently available to reduce user densities and improve distribution of growing demand. Timing of allowed use and/or facility design and access would be used to reduce winter recreation conflicts. In some cases additional parking would be provided to increase snowmobile opportunities. Areas closed to winter motorized uses because of critical big game winter range total 136,700 acres or 11% of total Forest acres. Areas open to winter motorized uses are increased by about 28,800 acres over existing. Heli-skiing would be allowed, though in a different area than currently permitted to offset terrain recommended as wilderness. Summer motorized recreation is allowed on routes designated as open in current Travel Maps except for those within areas recommended as wilderness. In these areas, about one mile of currently open motorized trail would be closed to motorized uses. Some routes not currently open on Ogden Ranger District Travel Maps would be evaluated for potential motorized trail development. ROS categories are similar, but not identical to current conditions (see Table 2-4 in the last section of this Chapter). Management Prescription Categories 4.1, 2.6, 1.5, and 4.2 provide some guidance for upper limits on desired user densities. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-4, 2-5 for acres of different recreation opportunities.*

Alternative 3 addresses the issue of **roadless area management** by applying management prescriptions that maintain or mostly maintain 425,000 acres or 70 percent of inventoried roadless area as undeveloped recognizing that these values are important in the context of the already developed portions of the forest along with dominance of development on private lands. Areas recommended for Wilderness designation (about 51,300 acres or 8% of inventoried roadless areas) are shown in dark green on the maps in the map packets. These areas were selected based on highest wilderness characteristics and minimizing conflicts with other uses. Remaining inventoried roadless areas are open for development to the extent consistent with the mapped prescription. Most are assigned to prescriptions that focus on habitats (aquatic or terrestrial) and generally would not be developed or would only be developed where it would be *necessary* for achieving habitat improvement or restoration (see Allowed Activities by prescription below). *See Comparison of Alternatives Table 2-6 for disposition of inventoried roadless areas.*

Alternative 3 addresses the issue of **ensuring biodiversity and species viability (including watershed functions)** by emphasizing:

- a. Managing at least portions of known wildlife corridors to maintain functions of corridors (regionally significant Bear River and currently designated western portion of East Fork Smiths Fork Uinta Mountains).
- b. Managing livestock grazing through standards included in the 1996 Rangeland Health Record of Decision to achieve the desired conditions identified in that document and with emphasis on restoration of riparian areas.
- c. Active vegetation management (prescribed fire, wildland fire use, suppression of fire for protection of life and property, timber harvest, thinning, mechanical treatment of fuels, and seeding with native species) to ensure landscapes function within the historic range of variability and mimicking of natural disturbance processes including insects and disease.
- d. Maintenance of 70 percent of inventoried roadless areas as undeveloped.
- e. Road decommissioning is pursued as consistent with current travel maps and evaluation of some routes for trails and priority is placed on improving water quality, fish habitat, and reduction of habitat fragmentation.
- f. Encouraging control or eradication of non-native species.
- g. Discouraging introductions of non-native species.
- h. Developing conservation measures for groups of species based on rarity, habitat and/or risk factors, as well as those already identified as threatened, endangered, or sensitive.
- i. Protecting and or restoring special habitats.
- j. Maintenance of existing Research Natural Areas (Mollens Hollow, Morris Creek, and Red Butte) except for realignment of the lower portion of Red Butte to create a Special Interest Area.

Alternative 3 addresses the issue of concerns about **economic contributions and social benefits of the forest** through providing some, but not necessarily maximizing, outputs. It allows commodity production to the degree possible while moving vegetation and landscapes to properly functioning conditions. Timber harvest is allowed on suited lands consistent with mapped prescriptions. Forage for livestock is available within standards for maintaining or moving toward properly functioning conditions and consistent with special habitat needs. Focus

for restoration of rangelands in unsatisfactory condition is on riparian areas. Vacant allotments remain vacant or are used in conjunction with improvement of active allotments, but not eliminated from allotment status. However, given recent funding levels, stocking of vacant allotments is unlikely. The appeal settlement zone on the North Slope Uinta Mountains is available for oil and gas leasing. Lease stipulations aligned with management prescriptions and special habitat needs provide for surface occupancy on about 12,900 acres and no surface occupancy on about 37,200 acres. Areas recommended for wilderness (prescription 1.5) are not available for lease. Economic contributions of recreation related services (concessions, outfitter/guides) continue at levels similar to current. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-2 and 2-7 for activities and outputs.*

Alternative 3 addresses the issue of **appropriate types and amounts of facility development** by allowing additional recreation facilities construction consistent with mapped prescriptions and Recreation Opportunity Classes. The intent is to accommodate some of the growing demand with focus on areas mapped with recreation prescriptions. Trail construction is allowed consistent with management prescriptions. Ski area boundary expansion is not allowed, nor are new ski areas. Facilities at ski areas would be consistent with the Resort Natural Setting landscape character theme.

Management Prescriptions and Allowed Activities Alternative 3

Prescription Category 1: Wilderness Alternative 3

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
1.1-1.4	No	No	Yes	No	Yes ¹	Yes	No	No
1.5	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

¹ As allowed under the 1984 Utah Wilderness Act

Prescription Category 2: Special Management Areas Alternative 3

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
2.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
2.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.6	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.7	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes ¹

¹ Associated with resource interpretation and public use

Prescription Category 3: Aquatic/Watershed or Terrestrial Integrity Alternative 3**Within Inventoried Roadless Areas:**

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
3.1-3.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

Outside Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
3.1-3.2	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ^{1,2}

¹Trail construction allowed if consistent with riparian management objectives²Trail construction is allowed with consideration of existing trail densities**Prescription Category 4: Recreation Needs and Opportunities Alternative 3**

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
4.1	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 5: Forested Vegetation Needs and Opportunities Alternative 3

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
5.1-5.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 6: Rangeland Vegetation Needs and Opportunities Alternative 3

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
6.1-6.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

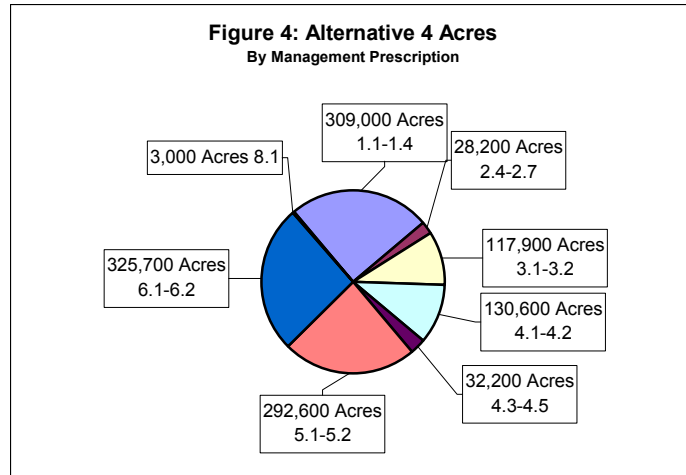
Prescription Category 8: Concentrated Development Areas Alternative 3

Prescrip- tion	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New</u> Rec Devel.	<u>New</u> Trail Constr.
8.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Alternative 4

Background/Theme

Alternative 4 is formally the “No Action” alternative required by the National Environmental Policy Act. It can also be described as the “continuation of management under direction of the 1985 forest plan” alternative. It represents the 1985 plan as written and amended, however, to contrast the direction of the 1985 plan with needs for change identified since 1992, other sources of management direction that have been applied, but not incorporated into the 1985 forest plan, are *not* included. The 1992 5-Year Monitoring Report found “*serious weaknesses*” which when taken in aggregate, resulted in a conclusion that a forest plan revision should be initiated.



Response to Issues

Alternative 4 addresses the issue of **recreation use conflicts and access management** by continuing motorized and non-motorized opportunities in summer according to current Travel Management Plans. Heli-skiing continues in currently permitted terrain. Recreation Opportunity Classes as mapped in the 1985 Forest Plan are provided on a map in the map packets for reference and acres open to winter motorized uses are shown in Chapter 3, however this map was never viewed or used as an allocation and was not revised as changes occurred through site-specific decisions. Areas closed to winter motorized uses because of critical big game winter range totaled 88,300 acres or 7% of total Forest acres. This recreation opportunity mapping anticipated more than double the number of acres of Roaded Natural than exists today, consequently significantly reducing the acres of semi-primitive recreation opportunities. The 1985 Plan discourages separation of uses. User densities are generally controlled through available parking, facility availability, and some areas where designated dispersed policies have been applied through recent project decisions. Increasing demand is met through recreation facility and trail construction and reconstruction investments (USDA Forest Service 1985: 342-349) that are contingent on actual budget allocations. See Tables 2-4 and 2-5 for Alternative 4's relative acreage of each recreation opportunity class for non-snow seasons and winter (minimum snow depth of 1 inches).

Alternative 4 assumes management direction to include:

- All Forest Plan amendments (#1-35). Examples of amendments which affect large areas: Rangeland Health Amendment, Goshawk Amendment, Utah Fire Amendment
- Current Travel Management Plans.
- Conservation strategies NOT requiring plan amendment applied project by project.
- Conclusions from 1992 5-Year Monitoring Report (Section V. pgs. 106-115) that have been incorporated into subsequent plan implementation: Resource Inventories,

- Recreation Program Management, Riparian Management, Timber Objectives, Water Quality Monitoring, Biodiversity, Budget/Target Issues, and Monitoring Requirements.
- e. 1985 Standards and Guidelines as amended.

Important note: The 1985 forest plan, although it did include “prescriptions”, did not employ the Management Prescription Categories now required for forest planning. Therefore, the mapping of management prescriptions for this Alternative shown on maps accompanying this document required a number of assumptions about, and interpretations of, the 1985 plan. There was no way to translate that plan with a 1:1 correlation to today’s prescription categories. The mapping of prescriptions for this Alternative therefore is only an estimation of the intent of that plan in prescription category terms. We have provided this mapping and relative acreages for purposes of comparison. Since that plan tended to be very general in some regards and presented management direction resource by resource without clear priorities or integration, the application of prescription categories was based on our best interpretation of that plan’s wording translated to today’s prescription categories.

It should also be noted that since 1992, when the need for plan revision was first identified, on-the-ground management has evolved to incorporate integration of the various resource management needs. This means that decisions on management of projects based on site-specific analyses have often resulted in actions that match prescriptions such as 5.1 or 6.1 rather than 5.2 or 6.2. However, since the Forest plan direction was not amended, prescription mapping to represent the 1985 plan is generally with prescriptions such as 5.2 or 6.2. These better match the wording in the 1985 plan.

Alternative 4 implements general direction from the 1985 plan emphasizing various outputs, but with project-by-project application of ecosystem approach and findings from the 1992 5-Year Monitoring Report. Except where project analyses have resulted in other combinations of multiple use emphasis based on integration of resource management needs, forested vegetation is managed for growth and yield on suited timberlands and suited rangelands are managed primarily for livestock forage. Outputs are dependent on investments (for example - USDA Forest Service 1985: pages IV – 355-373, Range Improvements- fences, water developments, noxious weed control, plowing, seeding, spraying, sagebrush burning, stock trail construction) and thus are contingent on actual budget allocations.

This alternative emphasizes improved facilities for recreation and accommodation of increased demands for recreation through additional facility construction, again contingent on budgets. Expansion of developed and dispersed summer and winter recreation is envisioned. Project decisions have addressed expansion of winter developed recreation for some ski-based resort areas. Other decisions about ski-based resort development are based on Master Development Plans completed or in progress.

Alternative 4 addresses the issue of **roadless area management** by recommending no additional areas for Wilderness designation to form a baseline with which to compare other alternatives that do make wilderness recommendations. Inventoried roadless areas are mapped with prescriptions that generally maximize flexibility, allowing development for commodity outputs and recreation access. About 131,900 acres or 22% of inventoried roadless areas are

mapped with prescriptions that maintain the undeveloped character because there are few other uses foregone. *See Comparison of Alternatives Table 2-6 for roadless area disposition.*

Alternative 4 addresses the issue of **ensuring biodiversity and species viability** project by project by emphasizing requirements of various conservation strategies as constraints on commodity production and in project design. The 1996 Rangeland Health Amendment established desired future conditions for rangeland ecosystems (riparian areas, uplands, aspen, and alpine areas) along with monitoring requirements. Projects such as prescribed burns and timber harvest are used to move vegetation communities toward or maintain them within the historic range of variability based on properly functioning condition assessments. Wildland fire use has been approved Forestwide. Noxious weeds are controlled contingent on budget available. Specific knowns (i.e. actual presence, nests, etc.) about species distribution and habitat needs guide management practices. Where there are unknowns, management flexibility for sustained commodity outputs is tempered by best available guidance provided on a project-by-project basis. Road density standards call for any new construction to be matched with equal road mile decommissioning. Habitat improvement (USDA Forest Service 1985: 350-354) focuses on big game winter range (burning, seeding, pruning), aspen restoration, snag and old growth marking, wildlife water development and aquatic structural improvements (lake aeration, in-stream structures), all investments contingent on actual budget allocations. Rangelands in unsatisfactory condition are addressed in Allotment Management Plan Revisions. Watershed improvement projects are listed (USDA Forest Service 1985: 377-382) with accomplishment contingent on budget allocations. More recent priorities for watershed restoration have been established through the Inland West Watershed Initiative and Clean Water Action Plan. Existing Research Natural Areas are maintained (Mollens Hollow, Morris Creek, Red Butte).

Alternative 4 addresses the issue of concerns about **economic contributions and social benefits of the Forest** through emphasis on predictable sustained commodity outputs constrained by conservation strategies, Forestwide Standards and Guidelines, and project specific mitigation. Forested lands are managed for timber production (with direction for priority on those lands susceptible to mountain pine beetle epidemics). Exceptions to these are areas removed because of high water table, regeneration difficulties, and where project-level environmental analyses have established additional objectives. Economic contributions from timber harvest have proved to be substantially less than the 1985 plan projected. Reevaluation in 1992 found timber volume objectives were inaccurate because of problems with volume conversions, timber availability assumptions, and technical concerns with implementation. Methods of timber harvest have more recently integrated ecosystem management principles through project-by-project analysis.

Except where Allotment Management Plan revisions have established adjusted combinations of multiple use emphasis based on integration of resource management needs, forage for livestock grazing is the emphasis on rangelands. Investment in numerous range structural improvements was anticipated in the 1985 Plan, however implementation contingent on budget allocations has been significantly less affecting output capabilities. Vacant allotments are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. However, given recent funding levels, stocking of vacant allotments is unlikely. Oil and gas leasing specifics were decided in 1994 for all but the appeal settlement zone, which is about 68,300 acres of inventoried roadless area on the North Slope of the Uinta Mountains. That area remains unavailable pending additional analysis. Existing leases (on about 19,000

acres) in this area (see oil and gas topic in Chapter 3) would continue as they exist now until they expire. Recreation related economic benefits are a function of roaded natural ROS, which maintains some roads associated with timber harvest as motorized and nonmotorized access to the Forest. Ski area boundary expansion is not allowed as recent Master Development Plans have resulted in decisions not to allow boundary expansions on National Forest System Lands. No new ski areas are allowed. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-2 and 2-7 for activities and outputs.*

Alternative 4 addresses the issue of **appropriate types and amounts of facility development** by listing all facilities along with projected development standards as well as identifying areas intended for additional development. However, available budgets did not match those projections and subsequent development has been less than anticipated. Reevaluation in 1992 found that the developed recreation site program needed to emphasize maintenance of existing facilities and correction of resource problems prior to construction of new facilities. New facility construction, including trail construction, in this Alternative would continue to be addressed in project-by-project analyses, contingent on budget allocations. Facilities in Ski Areas are consistent with decisions made in Master Development Plans.

Management Prescriptions and Allowed Activities Alternative 4

Prescription Category 1: Wilderness Alternative 4

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing ¹	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
1.1-1.4	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

¹ As allowed under the 1984 Utah Wilderness Act

Prescription Category 2: Special Management Areas Alternative 4

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
2.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
2.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.6	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
2.7	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes

Prescription Category 3: Aquatic/Watershed or Terrestrial Integrity Alternative 4

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
3.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

								Yes
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Prescription Category 4: Recreation Needs and Opportunities Alternative 4

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
4.1	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 5: Forested Vegetation Needs and Opportunities Alternative 4

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
5.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5.2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 6: Rangeland Vegetation Needs and Opportunities Alternative 4

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
6.1-6.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

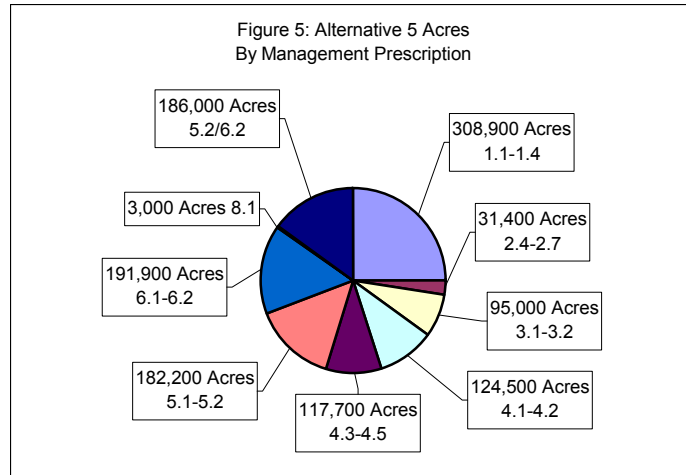
Prescription Category 8: Concentrated Development Areas Alternative 4

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	<u>New Rec Devel.</u>	<u>New Trail Constr.</u>
8.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Alternative 5

Background/Theme

Alternative 5 addresses the concern that the Forest can and should be used to directly benefit economies, livelihoods, and utilitarian traditions of families and local communities through predictable sustained outputs while allowing a variety of other non-exclusive uses and minimizing restrictions or requirements that drive up operating costs. While this alternative was developed to respond to concerns that often might be associated with rural communities, constituents who reviewed the Preliminary Alternatives package pointed out that many rural communities adjacent to the Wasatch-Cache National Forest have a wide diversity of views and values regarding appropriate forest management. This alternative does respond to the desires of people (rural, urban, or otherwise) who would like to see continuation of many historic and/or traditional uses of the forest and its resources, sometimes even for new purposes, but with restrictions only as necessary to meet legal requirements. This alternative strives to accommodate a variety of uses within the same areas to avoid need for separation or restriction.



Response to Issues

Alternative 5 addresses the issue of **recreation use conflicts and access management** by increasing motorized access over current and identifying potential areas and/or times for motorized and non-motorized winter uses to reduce conflicts. Additional areas (including some big game winter ranges) are opened to snowmobile access to reduce user densities and improve distribution of growing demand. Areas closed to winter motorized uses because of critical big game winter range total 129,500 acres or 10% of total Forest acres. Heli-skiing continues in currently permitted terrain. The roaded natural and semiprimitive motorized Recreation Opportunity Classes are the most common, expanding access, additional facilities, and dispersal of current uses to accommodate growing recreation demand. This alternative reduces some of the existing semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-4 and 2-5 for acres of different recreation opportunities.*

Alternative 5 assumes active management for sustained yields can be used to improve productivity and health of the forest. Access plays a major role in the ability to use the land. Timber management to prevent insect, disease, and wildfire outbreaks is envisioned in this alternative. Livestock grazing tied to year-round local ranching operations is supported on forest by vegetation management to increase forage production. Grazing is also viewed as a tool to reduce fine fuels and competition with regeneration of young trees. This Alternative takes a restrained approach to sustaining species and their habitat. By restrained we mean striving to prevent listing, but minimizing rather than assuming as necessary, restrictions on resource uses given the many unknowns about rare species. Forage for livestock, timber for harvest, oil and

gas leasing, and recreation related services and opportunities are emphasized while actively managing all of these uses together to reduce or avoid conflicts and achieve improved productivity of the land and resources.

Recreation opportunities in this alternative are increased over existing in the rural and roaded natural classes as a result of development of inventoried roadless areas for timber harvest and oil and gas exploration and development. Recreation is expected to be coordinated with other uses in the same areas in such a way that conflicts are minimized or avoided. More total recreation capacity is available because of increased numbers of facilities, allowance for higher user densities, and increased access.

Alternative 5 addresses the issue of **roadless area management** by recommending no additional areas for Wilderness designation consistent with the view that the existing 309,000 acres of Wilderness areas meet needs for wilderness and are an appropriate relative proportion of the forest. About 117,100 acres or 19 percent of inventoried roadless areas where few other uses would be foregone are managed to protect roadless area values. Remaining inventoried roadless areas are managed to provide access for timber and grazing management, oil and gas exploration and development, and recreation with project-by-project attention to critical habitats for wildlife, fish, and plant population viability. *See Comparison of Alternatives Table 2-6 for disposition of inventoried roadless areas.*

Alternative 5 addresses the issue of **ensuring biodiversity and species viability** by emphasizing prevention of listings with minimum requirements of various conservation strategies. Highest priority areas are protected through project-by-project mitigation measures. Specific knowns (presence, nests, etc.) about species distribution and habitat needs guide management practices. Where there are unknowns, management flexibility for sustained commodity outputs is given priority. Already designated Wilderness areas are provided for connectivity and low influence from human activities for wildlife habitat. Prescribed fire and wildland fire use in forested landscapes are allowed in areas with very low or no commercial timber value. Vegetation treatments are focused on forage production while being sensitive to protection of soils and vegetation. Areas in unsatisfactory condition are managed for restoration to forage production through proper grazing and recreation management. Special habitats are managed through mitigation of activities and regular monitoring to insure that populations are not significantly declining. Existing Research Natural Areas are maintained (Mollens Hollow, Morris Creek, Red Butte). The lower boundary of Red Butte Research Natural Area is adjusted to create a Special Interest Area.

Alternative 5 addresses the issue of concerns about **economic contributions and social benefits of the Forest** through emphasis on predictable sustained commodity outputs constrained project-by-project with application of conservation measures and mitigation requirements of law (endangered species, clean water and air, soil productivity, cultural resources protection). An aggressive management program for forested lands emphasizes sustained yield, and health of the forest (prevention of insects and disease, reduction of fuels, thinning of dense, slowly growing stands and increasing diversity of age structure). In cases where project environmental analyses or monitoring identify direct conflicts with plant or animal population viability, mitigation of livestock grazing is applied. In rangeland areas, prescribed

fire and wildland fire use are allowed to reduce brush canopy cover for increasing forage production although treatments are timed to minimize impacts to on-going grazing operations. Vacant allotments are available for use based on completion of required environmental analysis. Given recent funding levels this analysis would not be completed any time soon. The Burro, Thompson Peak, and West Beaver Allotments in the Uinta Mountains would remain vacant because of conflicts with bighorn sheep. Lands in the appeal settlement zone are available for oil and gas leasing under standard lease terms. Commodity outputs include recreation related services that produce economic benefits for local communities. Ski area boundary expansion would be allowed at Nordic Valley, The Canyons, Solitude and Snowbird. This alternative allows new ski areas. Recreation Opportunity Spectrum mapping meshes with access for timber and forage production as well as oil and gas exploration and development. Commodity outputs for this Alternative are expected to be the highest of the six Alternatives. *See Comparison of alternatives Tables 2-2 and 2-7 for activities and outputs.*

Alternative 5 addresses the issue of **appropriate types and amounts of facility development** by accommodating current and future demands for recreation opportunities with development of appropriate facilities to expand multi-seasonal uses. More areas (primarily adjacent to current ski areas) are identified as Resort Natural Setting landscape character theme for scenery management. Ski area expansion is allowed as well as additional parking in various high demand areas throughout the Forest. Facilities are developed and new trails constructed to disperse and/or mitigate concentration of recreation in areas, especially those along streams and lakes. However, resources available for this development are expected to be a limiting factor considering recent funding levels.

Management Prescriptions and Allowed Activities Alternative 5

Prescription Category 1: Wilderness, Alternative 5

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing ¹	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
1.1-1.4	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

¹ As allowed under the 1984 Utah Wilderness Act

Prescription Category 2: Special Management Areas, Alternative 5

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
2.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
2.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.6	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No ¹
2.7	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes ²

¹ Trail reconstruction and realignment are allowed to correct resource problems

²Associated with resource interpretation and public use

Prescription Category 3: Aquatic/Watershed or Terrestrial Integrity, Alternative 5

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
3.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹
3.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²

¹Trail construction allowed if consistent with riparian management objectives

²Trail construction is allowed with consideration of existing trail densities

Prescription Category 4: Recreation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 5

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
4.1	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 5: Forested Vegetation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 5

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
5.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5.2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 6: Rangeland Vegetation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 5

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
6.1-6.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

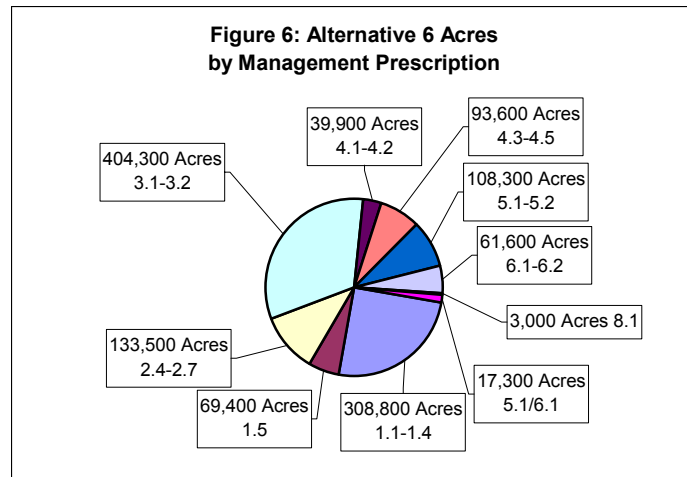
Prescription Category 8: Concentrated Development Areas, Alternative 5

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
8.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Alternative 6

Background/Theme

This Alternative was developed after comments on the five “Preliminary Alternatives” had been compiled. The purpose was to round out the range of alternatives and provide some combinations of management prescriptions and emphasis in specific areas that were not represented by the other alternatives.



Alternative 6 addresses concerns about **needs for emphasis on biodiversity**, by mimicking natural processes in some areas with active human management while restoring natural processes to other areas with minimal human intrusion. Conservation of large roadless areas, highlighting of substantial areas for emphasis on sustaining important terrestrial and aquatic habitats, and concentrating activities in areas where they can be managed sustainably provides the basis for this alternative. Uses are allowed and mitigated to maintain ecosystem functions in some areas while in other areas uses are restricted to achieve restoration or protection of properly functioning ecosystem conditions. In inventoried roadless areas, no road construction or reconstruction is allowed and timber harvest is strictly limited consistent with the National Roadless Rule. Expected commodity outputs are lower than recent years with some areas providing a limited, but continual supply and others removed or reduced from commodity production to sustain other important wildland values (such as watershed functioning, ecological reserves and biodiversity corridors, opportunities for solitude, and special designation of reference benchmarks for learning – Research Natural Area/Special Interest Area).

Recreation opportunities are managed intensively in some areas to meet increasing demands, especially in the wildland/urban interface. Areas further from major population bases are managed for a wider variety of recreation opportunities including substantial areas of primitive and semiprimitive classes. Winter recreation uses are separated in key areas to provide both motorized and non-motorized opportunities with access and parking. Total area available for snowmobiling is less than current but high and moderate use areas are maintained as open. Summer motorized recreation is allowed on routes designated as open in current Travel Maps.

Response to Issues

Alternative 6 addresses the issue of **recreation use conflicts and access management** by allowing winter motorized use except where there are specific reasons not to allow it. These include portions of big game winter ranges, specific areas for cross-country skiing, areas recommended for wilderness, and some areas where a motorized boundary is difficult to manage. Conflicts between winter motorized and non-motorized uses are resolved through identification of desirable snowmobiling and cross-country skiing areas, analysis of overlaps and determination of areas to separate these uses. Areas closed to winter motorized uses because of critical big

game winter range total 166,700 acres or 13% of total Forest acres. Heli-skiing continues in currently permitted terrain. Summer motorized recreation is allowed on routes designated as open in current Travel Maps. Areas recommended as wilderness do not contain any currently open motorized roads or trails. Some routes not currently open on 1988 travel maps for Ogden Ranger District would be evaluated for potential motorized trail development. Primitive and semiprimitive recreation opportunity classes (both motorized and nonmotorized) are managed (potential permit system) to maintain low user densities. Other opportunity classes are managed to allow for increases in demand by more intensive measures such as site hardening and designation of dispersed campsites. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-4 and 2-5 for acres of various recreation opportunities.*

Alternative 6 addresses the issue of **roadless area management** by adjusting allowed activities for prescriptions in inventoried roadless areas to be consistent with the National Roadless Area Conservation Rule. Road construction and reconstruction are not allowed in these areas, nor is cutting, sale, and removal of timber except: for the cutting, sale or removal of generally small diameter trees which maintains or improves roadless characteristics *and* 1) to improve habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, or sensitive species, or 2) to maintain or restore ecosystem composition and structure, such as reducing the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire effects. About 70,000 acres or 12 percent of inventoried roadless areas are recommended for Wilderness designation. Areas selected have the highest quality wilderness characteristics and relatively easily managed boundaries, but minimize conflicts with existing uses and other uses foregone. Inventoried roadless areas not recommended for wilderness apply prescriptions that protect roadless character. *See Comparison of Alternatives Table 2-6 for disposition of inventoried roadless areas and FEIS Appendix C1 and C2 for details about individual inventoried roadless areas.*

Alternative 6 addresses the issue of **ensuring biodiversity and species viability (including watershed functions)** by emphasizing factors known to contribute to conservation biology with a combined approach of active human intervention in some areas and minimal intervention in others by taking actions as follows:

- a. Identifying current or managing to create a system of areas representing all native ecological units and seral stages across their historic range of variation.
- b. All known wildlife corridors managed to maintain function of corridor (regionally significant Bear River and currently designated western portion of East Fork Smiths Fork Uinta Mountains).
- c. Manage and/or restore rangelands and manage livestock grazing (through Allotment Management Planning) to restore proper functioning of watersheds, riparian areas, and lands in unsatisfactory condition. Three vacant sheep allotments in the Uinta Mountains (Burro, Thompson, and West Beaver) are closed for bighorn sheep habitat. Other vacant allotments are evaluated on a case-by-case basis for use in conjunction with existing active allotments to restore desired conditions or for removal from allotment status. However, given recent funding levels, stocking of vacant allotments is unlikely.
- d. Active vegetation management practices such as suppression of fire for protection of life and property, timber harvest, thinning, mechanical treatment of fuels, and/or seeding with native species is applied primarily to lands already roaded or developed, mimicking natural disturbance processes including insects and disease where possible; while

practices including prescribed fire, and wildland fire use are emphasized in undeveloped lands to move landscapes within the historic range of variability to the degree that is compatible with other objectives.

- e. Maintain inventoried roadless areas as undeveloped.
- f. Road decommissioning is pursued as consistent with Travel Maps (upon evaluation for potential motorized trails for 1988 Travel Maps) and priority placed on improving water quality, fish habitat, and watershed functions and reduction of habitat fragmentation.
- g. Take aggressive actions to greatly reduce noxious weeds.
- h. Maintain or restore connectivity of forested lands.
- i. Discourage introductions of non-native species, especially in wilderness.
- j. Monitor and assess for viability groups of species identified as management indicator species and/or focal species (categories of species used to assess ecological integrity).
- k. Protect and/or restore special habitats (3 grazing allotments in the Uinta Mountains would be phased out from allotment status if permits are voluntarily waived without preference, to provide for bighorn sheep habitat).
- l. Encourage restoration of native cutthroat trout to key drainages (Hayden Fork, Whitney, Temple Fork, Beaver Creek, Causey, South Fork Weber).
- m. Maintenance of existing Research Natural Areas (Mollens Hollow, Morris Creek, and Red Butte) except for realignment of the lower portion of Red Butte to create a Special Interest Area; include additional acreage with current Morris Creek RNA.
- n. Designate special interest areas in Willard Basin, and lower Logan Canyon for botanical values, and the T.W. Daniels Experimental Forest for educational purposes.

Alternative 6 addresses the issue of concerns about **economic contributions and social benefits of the Forest** through using opportunities for economic benefit from active vegetation management areas, while mitigating for maintenance of biodiversity, species viability, and watershed health. Values for water quality, air quality, natural ecological functions, and perpetuation of species, as well as administrative and environmental costs of commodity outputs are recognized and included.

Some forested lands are identified as suitable and mapped with prescription 5.2 for emphasis on timber production. Other tentatively suited lands are available for timber harvest where that activity can be mitigated to meet habitat objectives and/or to mimic natural disturbance processes. Livestock grazing is managed on suitable rangelands to meet standards associated with habitat and watershed needs. Allotments with substantial areas in unsatisfactory condition will be highest priority for Allotment Management Plan revision. Where movement of livestock or other structural means does not accomplish satisfactory conditions (based on monitoring), or are not economically feasible, livestock grazing will be removed. Vacant allotments are evaluated on a case-by-case basis for either use in conjunction with improving conditions on other active allotments or for removal from allotment status. However, given recent funding levels, stocking of vacant allotments is unlikely. Lands in the appeal settlement zone recommended as wilderness in the Uinta Mountains are not available to lease for oil and gas development. The remaining lands in the appeal settlement zone are available for leasing primarily with no surface occupancy. About 3,600 acres are available with surface occupancy. Recreation related opportunities for economic benefits are tied to the ROS classes. Ski area boundary expansions are not allowed nor are new ski areas. In general, outputs are somewhat

less than in recent years and are dependent on ability to mitigate for biodiversity, species viability and watershed health. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-2 and 2-7 for activities and outputs.*

Alternative 6 addresses the issue of **appropriate types and amounts of facility development** by allowing some additional facility development primarily in roaded natural, rural and urban ros classes. Replacement of current facilities that have unacceptable impacts to resources is emphasized along with site designation and access hardening in heavily used or potentially heavily used dispersed recreation areas to prevent impacts. Facility design and construction must include mitigation for maintenance of biodiversity, species viability and watershed health. Trail construction is allowed consistent with management prescriptions to provide a variety of opportunities, particularly in already developed areas. Facilities at ski areas would be consistent with Resort Natural Setting landscape character theme.

Management Prescriptions and Allowed Activities Alternative 6

Prescription Category 1: Wilderness, Alternative 6

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire ¹	Road Building	Grazing ²	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
1.1-1.5	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

¹ As allowed to meet wilderness objectives

² As allowed under the 1984 Utah Wilderness Act

Prescription Category 2: Special Management Areas, Alternative 6

Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
2.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
2.5	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.6	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.7	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

Outside Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
2.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No ¹
2.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.6	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No ¹

2.7	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes ²
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¹Trail reconstruction and realignment are allowed to correct resource problems

²Associated with resource interpretation and public use

Prescription Category 3: Aquatic/Watershed or Terrestrial Integrity Alternative 6

Within Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
3.1	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ¹
3.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ²

¹Trail construction allowed if consistent with riparian management objectives

²Trail construction is allowed with consideration of existing trail densities

Outside Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
3.1	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ¹
3.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²

¹Trail construction allowed if consistent with riparian management objectives

²Trail construction is allowed with consideration of existing trail densities

Prescription Category 4: Recreation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 6

Within Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
4.1	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.5	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Outside Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
4.1	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

4.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 5: Forested Vegetation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 6

Within Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
5.1-5.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Outside Inventoried Roadless Areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
5.1-5.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 6: Rangeland Vegetation Needs and Opportunities Alternative 6

Within Inventoried Roadless areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
6.1-6.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Outside Inventoried Roadless areas:

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
6.1-6.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 8: Concentrated Development Areas Alternative 6

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.

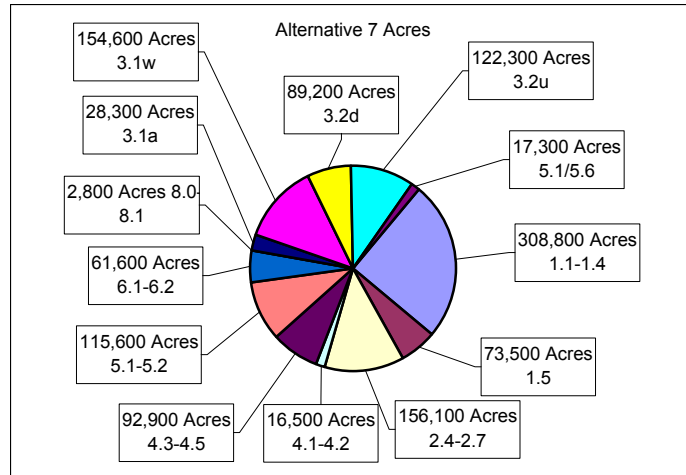
Final Environmental Impact Statement

8.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
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Alternative 7

Background/Theme

This Alternative was developed after public comments on the six alternatives described in the draft environmental impact statement had been reviewed, categorized, and analyzed. The purpose was to improve resolution of issues raised in public comments and to adapt the final preferred/decision alternative to current policy. Some components of the DEIS Preferred Alternative 6, were retained while other components were adjusted in response to comments and in response to recent policy regarding roads analysis and roadless area management.



Key changes made to the DEIS preferred alternative to develop this alternative include:

- Evaluation of individual roadless area values (FEIS Appendix C2) and identification of roadless areas or portions of roadless areas to be 1) recommended as wilderness, 2) maintained as roadless or undeveloped, or 3) where timber harvest, road construction or other development would be allowed.
- Clarification of intent with regard to allowed activities for management prescription categories 3.1 and 3.2 by 1) Dividing 3.1 into two subcategories- 3.1A specifically for riparian/aquatic emphasis and 3.1W specifically for upland watershed emphasis; and 2) Dividing 3.2 into two subcategories- 3.2U for terrestrial wildlife habitat not allowing development (primarily roading and timber harvest) and 3.2D for terrestrial wildlife habitat allowing this type of development (See also Tables of Allowed Activities for Alternative 7, and Revised Forest Plan Chapter 4A.5, Management Prescriptions).
- Clarification of intent in all prescriptions for allowing new trail construction (See Tables of Allowed Activities).
- Identification of fuel treatment needs in wildland urban interface areas and mapping of management prescriptions that allow mechanical fuel treatment on these areas (Prescription 2.6 does *not* allow this).
- An additional Guideline for lower allowed forage utilization on rangelands in unsatisfactory condition in response to concerns about rangeland conditions.
- Identification of additional areas of the North Slope Uinta Mountains where bighorn sheep habitat could be emphasized in the future should livestock grazing permits be voluntarily waived without preference.
- Adjustment of outputs and activities projections with improved information.
- Changes in prescription mapping, recreation opportunity class mapping, and winter recreation mapping for specific areas in response to public concerns.

Alternative 7 addresses concerns about needs for emphasis on biodiversity by attempting to balance human impacts and uses with maintenance of overall ecological integrity. This

Alternative proposes actively managing (primarily vegetation treatments) some areas of the forest to restore ecological functioning and reduce hazardous fuels, allowing continued production of commodity resources for human use in many areas, and in other areas, allowing natural processes to proceed with less human intrusion. This management approach emphasizes conservation of *most* (75% of total) roadless areas and their values by maintaining them as undeveloped (with application of management prescriptions 1.5, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1A, 3.1W, 3.2U, 4.1, 4.2- see Maps). It highlights substantial areas for emphasis on sustaining important terrestrial and aquatic habitats through active management with uses restricted, to achieve restoration or protection of properly functioning ecosystem conditions (prescriptions 3.1A, 3.2U and D- see Maps). This Alternative concentrates human uses and commodity production activities in areas where they can be managed sustainably, i.e. mitigated to maintain primary ecosystem functions (prescriptions 2.5, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1- see Maps). Expected total commodity outputs are slightly lower than in recent years with some areas providing a limited, but continual supply and others removed or reduced from commodity production to sustain other important wildland values (such as watershed functioning, ecological reserves and biodiversity corridors, opportunities for solitude, and special designation of reference benchmarks for learning such as RNA/SIA).

Recreation opportunities are managed intensively in selected areas to meet increasing demands, while recognizing the importance of watersheds especially in the vicinity of current and future urbanization. Areas further from major population bases are managed for a wider variety of recreation opportunities including substantial areas of primitive and semiprimitive classes. The popularity of recreation (especially camping) outside developed sites is recognized and specific actions to provide for this use while protecting watersheds and vegetation are proposed. Winter recreation uses are separated in several areas to provide both motorized and non-motorized opportunities with access and parking. Recognizing the distances that can be covered and growing demand, total area open for snowmobiling is 540,700 acres or 44% of total Forest acres (25% of which are Congressionally designated Wilderness). Areas closed to snowmobiling specifically for providing quality non-motorized winter opportunities total 7,500 acres or .8% of total Forest acres. Areas closed to winter motorized uses because of critical big game winter range total 190,700 acres or 15% of total Forest acres. Summer motorized recreation is allowed on routes designated as open in current Travel Maps and several areas for potential future expansion of designated motorized routes are identified.

Response to Issues

Alternative 7 addresses the issue of **recreation use conflicts and access management in winter** by providing for winter motorized use consistent with growing demand and the nature of the activity (i.e. large distances can be covered), while identifying selected areas for separation of non-motorized winter opportunities. Portions of big game winter ranges, specific areas for cross-country skiing, some areas recommended for wilderness, and some areas where a boundary is impractical to manage are identified and mapped as non-motorized. Designated routes are identified through some big game winter ranges to allow snowmobile access to desirable higher elevation areas. Snowmobiling use where it exists now (Lakes and portions of High Uintas roadless areas) within areas recommended for wilderness continues to be allowed as interim

management until such time that Congress acts on wilderness designation. Heli-skiing continues to be allowed in currently permitted terrain.

Opportunities for summer motorized recreation are provided on routes designated as open in current Travel Maps. Some areas with potential routes not currently open on travel maps for Ogden and Logan Ranger Districts are identified for potential future motorized trail development (See Revised Forest Plan, Chapter 4.B. Management Area Direction- Desired Future Conditions). Also the Shoshone Trail System is emphasized connecting existing motorized routes on National Forest, Bureau of Land Management, and State lands to provide extended riding opportunities between communities while providing an alternative to the unauthorized trails in sensitive watersheds along the Wasatch Front. Primitive and semiprimitive recreation opportunity classes have identified ranges of user densities to allow for monitoring of use patterns. Upon approaching thresholds, this Alternative proposes public notification and evaluation of whether to initiate management actions (potential permit system or other actions) to maintain, limit, or allow for increases in user densities and amend the ROS Class. Other opportunity classes are managed to allow for increases in demand by more intensive measures such as site hardening and designation of dispersed campsites. *See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-4 and 2-5 for acres of various recreation opportunities.*

Special emphasis on education and enforcement is proposed through an objective in the Revised Forest Plan in response to public comments. Off Highway Vehicle use, watershed health, and user ethics are identified as key focus areas for education and enforcement.

Alternative 7 addresses the issue of **roadless area management** by applying evaluation of individual roadless area values (FEIS Appendix C2) and resource capabilities/conditions to mapping of management prescriptions that either maintain or mostly maintain undeveloped character (75% of roadless acres) or allow varying types and degrees of development for specific purposes consistent with the prescription emphasis (25% of roadless acres). Road construction and reconstruction are not allowed in most roadless areas, nor is cutting, sale, and removal of timber. In most of these areas, prescribed and wildland fire use will be the primary approach to returning vegetation to properly functioning conditions. Timber harvest and road construction are allowed in portions of some roadless areas for purposes of improving habitat for terrestrial wildlife (prescription 3.2D) and to maintain or restore ecosystem composition and structure and/or reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire effects (prescription 5.1), and for purposes of timber production (prescription 5.2). About 73,300 acres or 12% of inventoried roadless areas are recommended for Wilderness designation because of their high quality wilderness characteristics and minimal conflicts with other uses. In this Alternative, unlike the others, the recommended wilderness prescription (1.5) allows prescribed fire and continuation of existing snowmobiling. See Comparison of Alternatives Table 2-6 for summary disposition of inventoried roadless areas and FEIS Appendices C1 and C2 for details about individual inventoried roadless areas.

Alternative 7 addresses the issue of **biodiversity and species viability (including watershed functions)** by emphasizing factors known to contribute to conservation biology with a combined approach of active human intervention in some areas and minimal intervention in others by taking actions as follows:

- a. Identifying current, or managing to create, a system of areas representing all native ecological units and seral stages across their historic range of variation.
- b. All known wildlife corridors managed to maintain function of corridor (regionally significant Bear River and currently designated western portion of East Fork Smiths Fork Uinta Mountains).
- c. Manage and/or restore rangelands and manage livestock grazing (through the new Guideline for lower allowed forage utilization (30-40% rather than 50%) on lands in unsatisfactory condition, improved emphasis on permit administration, refined annual operating instructions, and Allotment Management Plan revisions) to restore proper functioning of watersheds, riparian areas, and lands in unsatisfactory condition. Closes vacant allotments (Clegg, Hardscrabble, Mill Canyon, Shingle Mill, and Wright) in the Salt Lake County and Davis County watersheds. Three vacant sheep allotments in the Uinta Mountains (Burro, Thompson, and West Beaver) are closed for bighorn sheep habitat. Other vacant allotments are left open pending future site-specific analysis. However, given recent funding levels, stocking of vacant allotments is unlikely.
- d. Active vegetation management practices such as suppression of fire for protection of life and property, timber harvest, thinning, mechanical treatment of fuels, and/or seeding with native species are applied to already developed areas and about 25 percent of inventoried roadless area acres, mimicking natural disturbance processes including insects and disease where possible; while practices including prescribed fire, and wildland fire use are emphasized in most (75%) undeveloped lands to move landscapes within the historic range of variability to the degree that this is compatible with other objectives.
- e. Maintain most (71%) high value inventoried roadless areas as undeveloped.
- f. Road decommissioning is pursued consistent with Travel Maps and priority based on roads analysis is placed on improving water quality, fish habitat, and watershed functions and reduction of habitat fragmentation.
- g. Take aggressive actions to greatly reduce noxious weeds.
- h. Maintain or restore connectivity of forested lands.
- i. Discourage introductions of non-native species, especially in wilderness.
- j. Monitor management indicator species and their habitats to validate assumptions about habitat relationships.
- k. Protect and/or restore special habitats (7 grazing allotments in the Uinta Mountains would be closed if permits are voluntarily waived without preference, to provide for bighorn sheep habitat; establish baselines of compacted snow within lynx analysis units in the Uinta Mountains).
- k. Add portions of the Burro Peaks, Thompson Peak and West Beaver Allotments to the adjacent, lower allotments, but maintains existing AUMs on those allotments.
- m. Encourage restoration of native cutthroat trout to key drainages (Hayden Fork, Whitney, Temple Fork, Beaver Creek, Causey, South Fork Weber).
- n. Maintenance of existing Research Natural Areas (Mollens Hollow, Morris Creek, and Red Butte) except for realignment of the lower portion of Red Butte to create a Special Interest Area allowing restoration research; include additional acreage with current Morris Creek RNA.
- o. Designate special interest areas in Willard Basin, and lower Logan Canyon for botanical values, and the T.W. Daniels Experimental Forest for scientific and educational purposes.

Alternative 7 addresses the issue of concerns about **economic contributions and social benefits of the Forest** through using opportunities for economic benefit from active vegetation management on lands capable and tentatively suitable (primarily areas mapped as 5.2 and 5.1), while mitigating for maintenance of biodiversity, species viability, and watershed health. Recreation opportunities are emphasized for their value both to local economies and to quality of life for both urban and rural communities. Values for water quality, air quality, natural ecological functions, and perpetuation of species, as well as administrative and environmental costs of commodity outputs are recognized and included for maximizing net public benefit.

Some forested lands are identified as suitable and mapped with prescription 5.2 for emphasis on timber production. Other tentatively suited lands are available for timber harvest including salvage where that activity can be mitigated to meet habitat objectives and/or to mimic natural disturbance processes. Timber harvest is also allowed where it can be used to reduce hazardous fuels, improve aquatic or terrestrial habitat, long-term scenic or recreation site values, and/or for watershed improvement. Livestock grazing is managed on suitable rangelands to meet standards and guidelines associated with habitat and watershed needs. A lower forage utilization allowance (30-40% instead of 50%) is applied to lands in unsatisfactory condition. Allotments with substantial areas in unsatisfactory condition are highest priority for improved grazing administration. Where movement of livestock or other structural means does not accomplish satisfactory conditions (based on monitoring of key areas), or are not economically feasible, livestock grazing will be removed through grazing permit action until satisfactory conditions are achieved. Eight vacant allotments are closed and the others are left vacant pending site-specific analysis. However, given experienced budget levels and priority of other, active allotments it is expected that most vacant allotments will remain vacant during the planning period. Within the Appeal Settlement Zone of the Uinta Mountains 47,900 acres are available for oil and gas leasing. Of those, 27,000 acres allow surface occupancy. The remaining 20,400 acres in this Zone are unavailable. Recreation related opportunities for economic benefits are tied to the ROS classes. Ski area boundary expansions are not allowed nor are new ski areas. In general, outputs are expected to be slightly less than recent years and are dependent on the degree to which projects for improvement of terrestrial or aquatic habitat yield commercially viable opportunities. See Comparison of Alternatives Tables 2-2 and 2-7 for activities and outputs.

Alternative 7 addresses the issue of **appropriate types and amounts of facility development** by allowing some additional facility development primarily in roaded natural, and rural ROS classes. Replacement of current facilities that have unacceptable impacts to resources is emphasized along with site designation and access hardening in concentrated recreation use areas to prevent and/or mitigate impacts. Facility design and construction must include mitigation for maintenance of biodiversity, species viability and watershed health. Trail construction is allowed consistent with management prescriptions to provide a variety of opportunities, particularly in already developed areas. Emphasis is identified for completion of the Bonneville Shoreline and Great Western Trails and to connect the existing trail opportunities on National Forest (Ogden and Logan Ranger Districts) with trails on Bureau of Land Management, State and private lands similar to the concept of the Shoshone Trail System. Facilities at ski areas are consistent with Resort Natural Setting landscape character theme. The only change from existing conditions for recreation opportunity classes is within ski area permit boundaries where

the designation changes from roaded natural to rural to focus growing recreation use where facilities are available.

Management Prescriptions and Allowed Activities Alternative 7

Prescription Category 1: Wilderness, Recommended Wilderness, Alternative 7

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
1.1-1.4	No	No	Yes ¹	No	Yes ²	Yes	No	No
1.5	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

¹ As allowed to meet Wilderness Objectives (FSM 2324.21)

² As allowed under the 1984 Utah Wilderness Act

Prescription Category 2: Special Management Areas, Alternative 7

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
2.4	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
2.5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.6	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.7	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ²	Yes	No	Yes ¹

¹ Associated with resource interpretation and public use

² Within existing Allotments

Prescription Category 3: Aquatic/Watershed or Terrestrial Integrity, Alternative 7

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
3.1A	Yes ²	Yes	Yes	No ¹	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ³
3.1W	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ⁴
3.2D	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3.2U	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

¹ Except for road crossings.

² For aquatic habitat or watershed improvement/restoration purposes only.

³ Trail construction allowed if consistent with riparian management objectives defined in site-specific analysis.

⁴ With consideration of existing road/trail densities.

Prescription Category 4: Recreation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 7

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
4.1	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.2	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
4.4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 5: Forested Vegetation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 7

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
5.1-5.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 6: Rangeland Vegetation Needs and Opportunities, Alternative 7

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
6.1-6.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Prescription Category 8: Concentrated Development Areas, Alternative 7

Prescription	Timber Harvest	Veg/Fuel Treatment	Prescribed Fire	Road Building	Grazing	Wildland Fire Use	New Rec Devel.	New Trail Constr.
8.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Alternatives Considered But Eliminated From Detailed Study

A large number of alternatives were considered and eliminated from detailed study. Given the size of the area under consideration and the number of decisions being made, there is an almost infinite array of possibilities for combining different alternative components in different ways and for variations in mapping. Our alternative development process involved many iterations of developing options in various combinations and then reviewing the total range to see if we had included the key differences highlighted in public responses. Some respondents to the DEIS suggested specific line changes on maps in order to improve manageability or encompass a preferred outcome on a particular favorite place. While these suggestions were read and considered during formulation of the additional Alternative 7, we did not make these changes to the six alternatives presented in the DEIS because they did not make a substantive difference to the overall range of alternatives. A number of alternatives were not fully developed because they closely resembled alternatives that were considered in detail; they did not meet the needs for change; they were outside the realm of forest plan decisions; or they were inappropriate for reasons described below.

No or Multiple Management Prescription Categories Alternatives

During the alternative development workshops in the fall of 1999 concerns about the use of Management Prescription Categories were raised and requests were made either to not use them at all, or to place multiple prescriptions on a single area of land. The concern expressed was that by mapping management prescriptions, the multiple use concept would be violated and opportunities for conflict resolution among competing uses would be reduced. The purpose of prescription categories and their use in planning across the nation was explained along with extensive discussions about consistency with the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act. (See the Revised Forest Plan Management Direction Package for this explanation.) We explained that the intent of prescriptions was not to allow one use to “trump” another and that conflicts between uses must be resolved locally based on the specific merits of the situation using the prescription along with other management direction to guide decisions. After numerous letters, meetings, and re-writes of the Management Direction Package of which prescriptions are a part, the notion of using prescriptions was finally accepted by the majority of participants. However, the concerns raised are important and clarifications based on these concerns have become an essential component of our Management Direction in the Revised Forest Plan. This Direction consists of goals, objectives, standards, guidelines, management prescriptions, recreation opportunity classes, scenery management objectives, desired future conditions, and monitoring and evaluation. It is the essence of the revised forest plan and is integral to implementing the suite of laws and policies pertaining to national forest management.

Comments on the DEIS also resulted in changes and clarifications of Management Prescriptions described earlier in this Chapter under the heading “Changes to Prescriptions Between Draft and Final”.

Travel Management Decisions

There were a large number of comments and suggestions related to Travel Management Planning. From the beginning of the revision process we informed participants that we had

current Travel Management Plans (or are in the process of revising them in the case of Evanston and Mountain View Districts) with designated routes identified for non-winter motorized use and areas identified for winter motorized use. Our evaluation of these plans coupled with rising interest and concern over snowmobile access lead the Forest Supervisor to define the scope of plan revision analysis to include decisions about areas open or closed to winter motorized use but not to revisit individual routes designated as open for non-winter motorized travel.

A number of national forest planning efforts in recent years have attempted to address the entire year-round, route-by-route travel management issue during forest plan revision. These efforts have resulted in the need for extensive site-specific analysis required for this type of decision by the National Environmental Policy Act, across the very large land area encompassed by a national forest. The contentious nature of the issues combined with this need for very detailed analysis has detracted from other important decisions to be made in revision and regional planning experts no longer recommend the practice. This fact along with the fact that we have completed site-specific analyses already for our travel management plans in recent years were the basis for eliminating alternatives based on suggestions or comments related to non-winter travel management. On the other hand, since forest plan decisions do include area allocations, and since the rapid increase in snowmobile and other winter recreation activities has happened since the completion of most of our current travel maps, the Forest Supervisor felt it was appropriate to address the decision of where winter motorized and non-motorized uses should be allowed in the revision and to integrate that decision with a number of other land allocation decisions required by the National Forest Management Act. Examples of comments that were related to this category of alternative include the following:

- Develop a non-motorized access plan to forest boundaries.
- Ban motorized recreation in the Tri-Canyon Area.
- Prohibit OHVs in inventoried roadless areas.
- Reopen roads that have been closed in the past.

Comments on the DEIS and Proposed Plan highlighted concerns about the adequacy of Travel Management Plans for Ogden, Salt Lake, and Logan Ranger Districts given that demand specifically for motorized trails (50 inches wide or less) has grown so rapidly because of increases in the number of ATVs. Also noted was the desire for loop trails for motorized use in these areas. Even with these concerns highlighted, the logic explained above still holds and Travel Management decisions for summer will require additional site-specific analysis. The need for this work is recognized and addressed as an Objective in the Revised Forest Plan. For a discussion of the relationship of Recreation Opportunity Classes and future Travel Planning see the section earlier in this Chapter under the heading “Changes to ROS Application Between Draft and Final and Relationship to Travel Planning.”

All Inventoried Roadless Areas Recommended for Wilderness

Some people who commented on the DEIS stated that there should be an alternative that recommends all inventoried roadless areas as wilderness. A review of Appendix C1 shows that not all of the inventoried roadless areas within the Wasatch-Cache National Forest are of equal quality with regard to wilderness characteristics. Capability is the first of three categories evaluated in making wilderness recommendations. We believe that it would be unreasonable to recommend areas with low quality wilderness characteristics (i.e. low “capability”) such as those

with many roads cherry-stemmed into the area, a high degree of evidence of past human activities (i.e. a low degree of naturalness), limited opportunities for solitude because of nearby development and or existing heavy use patterns, just because the areas met the definitions used in inventory of roadless areas. Alternative 1 was designed to provide the maximum reasonable recommendation for wilderness from the larger pool of inventoried roadless areas.

No Livestock Grazing Alternative

Some plan revision participants requested that a “no grazing alternative” be analyzed or that we should consider phasing out livestock grazing in roadless areas or wilderness as an alternative. The National Forest Management Act does require that we address rangeland capability and suitability, which we have in this FEIS. We have analyzed alternatives using different suitability criteria such as removal of riparian areas and/or uplands in unsatisfactory conditions, or removal of areas because of conflicts with bighorn sheep or heavy recreation use, however none of these results in “no livestock grazing.” We do not believe it is reasonable to use a criterion such as “roadlessness” for determining suitability for livestock grazing. There is no direct relationship between roadlessness and any conflict with or impact from livestock grazing. As for using Wilderness as a suitability criterion, Section 303 of the Utah Wilderness Act of 1984 specifically states that recreation conflicts alone would not be the determining factor in the removal of livestock from those newly established Wilderness Areas, however, resource conditions could be cause for reductions in livestock numbers.

Allotment Management Planning generally does include analysis of a “no grazing alternative” with the necessary Allotment level site-specificity for making such a determination. Grazing Permits are a long-term authorization to graze livestock subject to Forestwide Standards and Guidelines, as well as Allotment Management Plans and Annual Operating Instructions. Changes to these direction documents must be based on site-specific environmental analysis and/or monitoring and administrative actions not encompassed at the broad scale of Forest Plan Revision.

This FEIS addresses the disposition of vacant allotments, and compares alternatives that use differing criteria for rangeland suitability. See FEIS Chapter 3, Topic 7 for a discussion of livestock grazing related decisions being made in this Plan revision. The Revised Forest Plan does include standards and guidelines designed to improve conditions of rangelands on the Forest. It also includes Objectives specifically aimed at improved management of livestock grazing.

Human Carrying Capacity Determinations and User Densities

A number of revision participants requested that an alternative include either a determination of human carrying capacity for key areas or a commitment to complete such a study as part of an alternative. The revision team spent considerable time exploring various approaches to addressing this. We reviewed research on the subject, talked to other recreation managers both in the Forest Service and in other agencies, and met with local academic experts on the subjects of social science and recreation management. We are incorporating our conclusions into this revision and they are as follows. Research has shown that people are more willing to accept numbers of other people than impacts from other people (Dale Blahna, personal communication, 2000). Carrying capacity conceptually is about “outputs”, not “outcomes”. Most current

ecosystem management and even strategic planning emphasizes outcomes. At this time we think qualitative descriptions of conditions visitors can expect to find are a more useful tool for managing sustainable recreation than focusing on numbers of people.

The carrying capacity concept came from natural and biological systems in which the implication is that there is a point of biophysical collapse. For recreation, any concept of capacity must come from a description of a desired future, very little of which will be represented by numbers. The critical indicators are where, how and when people are recreating. Recreation user's behavior and expectations are more defining than numbers of people. Furthermore, there is more merit to limits being applied to low-use rather than high-use areas. Placing upper-limit capacities on highly used areas only displaces that use to more lightly used areas, spreading and increasing impacts to biophysical resources, affecting experiences of people already using the lower density areas, and ultimately homogenizing recreation experiences. It may be more appropriate to harden highly used sites to reduce biophysical impacts and keep people where this mitigation is provided. Finally, any consideration of user density problems needs to be addressed at appropriate scales. Both broader scale regional assessments and finer scale local analysis are needed. Research has shown significant differences even between what adjacent communities may want from their public lands. The forest plan revision cannot accomplish this specific need.

Therefore, we have incorporated two changes between Draft and Final to address some of these concerns. First, given that the original concerns about human carrying capacity were focused on the Central Wasatch area because of the public supply watersheds there, Alternative 7 applies the Management Prescription 3.1w emphasizing watershed, rather than the series of recreation focused prescriptions applied in the Draft Preferred Alternative 6. This change was made to ensure that watershed protection is appropriately emphasized as demand for recreation in these canyons continues to grow. Second, with regard to the social concerns about user densities and providing for some areas with relatively lower densities in the future, we have refined the primitive and semi-primitive recreation opportunity classes (see FEIS Appendix D-2) to include ranges of user contacts that will establish thresholds. When monitoring shows that thresholds are being approached in areas mapped with the semi-primitive class, that will be the trigger for initiating public involvement in evaluation of whether to take actions to maintain densities below thresholds (through permit systems or other mechanisms) or to amend the recreation opportunity class to allow for growth.

No New Special Uses for Commercial Purposes

While this particular suggestion is not a part of any specific alternative, it is addressed in the Revised Forest Plan. Direction for Special Uses is included in the Forestwide Goals, Guidelines, and in Revised Forest Plan Appendix X Implementation Guidance where criteria are provided for evaluating proposed outfitter guide special uses.

Wilderness Recommendation in Alternative 4 (No Action)

It was suggested that wilderness recommendations should be included in this alternative because of the requirement to reevaluate inventoried roadless areas as a part of revision. After development of the full range of alternatives we believe that an adequate range of reasonable alternatives for wilderness recommendations is presented without adding this to the No Action

Alternative. This alternative serves as a baseline for contrasting other alternatives with continued management under the 1985 Forest Plan as amended.

Add Large Predators as Management Indicator Species

Some revision participants requested that large predators should be used as management indicator species (MIS).

The 1982 NFMA planning regulations at CFR 219.19 (a) (1) state “In order to estimate the effects of each alternative on fish and wildlife populations, certain vertebrate and/or invertebrate species present in the area shall be identified and selected as management indicator species and the reasons for their selection will be stated. These species shall be selected because their population changes are believed to indicate the effects of management activities (emphasis added). In the selection of MIS, the following categories shall be represented where appropriate: Endangered and threatened plant and animal species identified on State and Federal lists for the planning area; species with special habitat needs that may be influenced significantly by planned management programs; species commonly hunted, fished, or trapped; non-game species of special interest; and additional plant or animal species selected because their population changes are believed to indicate the effects of management activities on other species of selected major biological communities or on water quality. On the basis of available scientific information, the interdisciplinary team shall estimate the effects of changes in vegetation type, timber age classes, community composition, rotation age, and year-long suitability of habitat related to mobility of MIS. Where appropriate, measures to mitigate adverse effects shall be prescribed.”

Large predators were not chosen as MIS because they did not meet three of the six criteria used to select MIS (Appendix J). Criteria not met were: 1-MIS must have a strong (but not exclusive) affinity for the habitat type; 2- The habitat type is key habitat in the life cycle of the MIS; and 4- The MIS is relatively easy to monitor, i.e., high visibility and in adequate numbers, above.

The CUFF Alternative

This Alternative was proposed in public comments on the DEIS. It suggested several prescriptions for suitable timber that would allow harvest in inventoried roadless areas. DEIS Alternative 5 already did this, Alternative 3 allows harvest in most roadless areas, and FEIS Alternative 7 allows timber harvest in selected roadless areas by applying prescriptions that allow this activity. New prescriptions were proposed: Timber with Wildlife Emphasis, was very similar to DEIS prescription 5.1 although it included road density and opening size restrictions for wildlife habitat. The Revised Forest Plan which could be implemented with any Alternative includes standards and guidelines that address both road construction and patch sizes desired for various vegetation types. Big Game Winter Range, while not a separate prescription, is addressed in numerous places in the Revised Plan including standards and guidelines, winter recreation mapping, mapping of Terrestrial Habitat Emphasis (prescription 3.2) and desired future conditions. Backcountry Motorized Emphasis, would allow cross-country motorized travel. This conflicts with both Wasatch-Cache National Forest policy and the Statewide agreement for an open on designated routes approach to OHV management. Visual Quality Protection would emphasize maintaining existing visual quality within major travel corridors. The Scenery Management System applied in all FEIS alternatives achieves this emphasis while

allowing for a variety of multiple use prescriptions. The CUFF Alternative is similar enough to Alternative 5 to be represented by it with very similar environmental effects.

The Balanced Alternative

This Alternative was proposed in public comments on the DEIS. It started with DEIS Alternative 5 and made changes to provide additional protection in some areas. This Alternative set forth detailed recommendations for prescriptions to be mapped in particular areas of the Logan Ranger District. It suggested that additional motorized trails be allowed on the eastern half of Logan and Ogden Districts, which is a future site-specific Travel Planning decision. It suggested ski area expansion be allowed and least constraints which Alternative 5 does, and it suggested watershed protection in specific areas which Alternative 7 does. The recommendations for this Alternative with detailed responses can be reviewed in FEIS Appendix A, Comment #151. Components suggested are included in one or more alternatives and analyzed in this FEIS.

Comparison of Alternatives

This section is a summary of key differences between alternatives for management prescriptions, projected activities and outputs, suitable lands, summer and winter recreation opportunities, inventoried roadless area disposition, and annual employment and labor income. Additional important details for each resource topic area are found in Chapter 3.

Table 2-1. Comparison of Alternatives Acres² by Management Prescription

	Alternatives						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.0 Wilderness							
1.1 Existing Wilderness - Opportunity Class I	178,000	178,000	178,000	61,900	178,000	143,200	143,200
1.2 Existing Wilderness – Opportunity Class II	105,800	105,800	105,800	98,300	105,800	139,400	139,400
1.3 Existing Wilderness – Opportunity Class III	25,100	25,100	25,100	19,600	25,100	26,200	26,200
1.4 Existing Wilderness - No Class	0	0	0	129,200	0	0	0
1.5 Recommended wilderness	388,900	145,900	51,500	0	0	69,400	73,500
2.0 Special Management Areas							
2.4 Research Natural Areas	5,600	5,600	4,600	6,200	5,300	5,600	5,600
2.5 Scenic Byways	20,600	20,600	20,600	22,000	23,100	22,800	21,100
2.6 Undeveloped Areas	197,900	192,000	85,000	0	2,000	88,500	111,200
2.7 Special Interest Areas and Special Areas	17,100	32,500	900	0	1,000	16,600	18,600
3.0 Protection, Maintenance or Restoration of Aquatic/Watershed or Terrestrial Integrity							

² Rounded to nearest 100 acres.

	Alternatives						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.1 Aquatic Habitat/Watershed Emphasis	138,200	181,500	158,600	106,400	70,400	186,000	0
3.1a Aquatic Habitat	0	0	0	0	0	0	28,300
3.1w Watershed Emphasis	0	0	0	0	0	0	154,600
3.2 Terrestrial Habitat Emphasis	86,800	138,200	201,600	11,500	24,600	218,300	0
3.2d Terrestrial Habitat Emphasis – developed	0	0	0	0	0	0	89,200
3.2u Terrestrial Habitat Emphasis – undeveloped	0	0	0	0	0	0	122,300
4.0 Multiple Resource Uses With Recreation Needs and Opportunities							
4.1 Backcountry Non-motorized Recreation Settings	3,200	30,000	56,700	126,700	104,000	19,900	13,000
4.2 Dispersed Non-motorized Recreation Settings	4,500	3,600	3,200	3,900	20,500	20,000	3,500
4.3 Backcountry Motorized Recreation Settings	16,000	25,000	30,600	1,800	17,300	32,600	27,100
4.4 Dispersed Motorized Recreation Settings	30,900	38,300	41,700	16,600	78,200	49,100	53,800
4.5 Developed Recreation Areas	12,200	13,100	12,300	13,800	22,200	11,900	12,000
5.0 Forested Vegetation Management Needs and Opportunities							
5.1 Maintain/Restore Forested Ecosystem Integrity	0	69,800	56,100	41,600	100	73,500	81,100
5.1/6.1 Mixed Forested/Rangeland Ecosystem Integrity	200	200	88,700	0	0	17,300	17,300
5.2 Manage Timber for Growth and Yield	0	0	43,800	251,000	182,100	34,800	34,500
5.2/6.2 Mixed Manage for Timber/Forage	0	0	0	0	186,000	0	0
6.0 Rangeland Vegetation Management Needs and Opportunities							
6.1 Maintain/Restore Rangeland Ecosystem Integrity	5,300	31,300	35,500	61,000	54,300	60,000	60,000
6.2 Manage for Livestock Forage Production	0	0	36,300	264,700	137,600	1,600	1,600
8.0 Concentrated Development Areas							
8.1 Mineral and Energy Development	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000

Assumptions For Projected Activities and Outputs

The following listing of activities and projected outputs is based on best estimates of some of the types and amounts of various work that could be completed to move toward desired conditions for the Forest during the planning period (10 years). A number of factors can affect whether and how much of any given activity actually can be implemented. Budgets are determined annually based on what Congress appropriates for Forest Service projects and operations. Dollar amounts are allocated for specific “program areas” such as watershed, wildlife and fish, recreation, timber minerals, range, etc. at the national level. These funds are then allocated to each of the Regions of the Forest Service and subsequently divided among all of the National Forests within a given Region. The mix of funds at the individual National Forest level can vary based on how much and in what program areas Congress appropriated dollars as well as how these dollars are then

allocated to each level of the Forest Service. In the case of activities such as oil and gas exploration and development, implementation is dependent on private sector proposals and actions rather than Forest Service action. Prior to implementation of most projects, there is required environmental analysis and planning that includes public review and comment as well as opportunities for appeals and litigation. Projects may be changed, delayed or even abandoned depending on the results of these processes. As new issues and new information arise changes in priority and needs for action may change. Recent emphasis on fire management and wildland urban interface fuels reduction through the National Fire Plan is a good example of this. Therefore the following should be viewed as a set of estimates or projections subject to numerous adjustments based on the factors described above.

Table 2-2. Comparison of Alternatives For Projected Activities and Outputs

	Alternatives						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Watershed Health (Total for 10 year planning period)							
Soil and Water Improvement Projects ¹	0	20	20	20	20	20	20
Aquatic Resources Improvement Projects ¹	0	50	15	20	10	25	25
Vegetation Treatments (Total acres for 10 year planning period)							
Prescribed Fire- Aspen & Aspen/Conifer Mixed ²	0	80,000	32,000	7,200	7,200	32,000	32,000
Aspen/Conifer Vegetative Treatment ²	0	6,500	5,250	6,250	3,100	3,000	5,000
Aspen/Conifer Commercial Harvest (acres) from MPC 5.2 ²	0	0	2,250	6,250	12,400	2,000	3,500
Prescribed Fire- Douglas-fir (non-lethal) ²	0	4,000	2,000	0	0	2,000	2,000
Prescribed Fire- Sagebrush ⁹	0	40,000	20,000	10,000	10,000	20,000	30,000
Mechanical Treatment- Oak ²	0	16,000	8,000	0	8,000	8,000	20,000
Prescribed Fire- Oak ²	0	40,000	20,000	8,000	20,000	20,000	8,000
ASQ/TSPQ Volume (MMBF-Annual) ³	0 / 0	0 / 2.1	1.6 / 3.2	3.3 / 6.2	6.2 / 7.8	2.0 / 3.9	2.0/4.5
Range Livestock (annual)							
<u>Cattle</u>							
Average AUMs	31,980	28,820	33,940	34,180	34,180	31,980	33,560
<u>Sheep</u>							
Average AUMs	23,160	20,870	24,580	24,750	24,750	23,160	24,300
Forest-wide Livestock Average AUMs ⁴	55,140	49,690	58,520	58,930	58,930	55,140	57,860
Roads and Trails (Total for 10 year planning period)							
New Timber Harvest Road Construction (miles) ¹	0	6	39	49	49	6	7
Projected New Oil and Gas Exploration Roads (miles) ⁵	3	3	6	0	10-11	6	7.5

	Alternatives						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Projected New Oil and Gas Development Roads (miles) ⁵	0	0	4	0	4	4	4
Roads Closed to Motorized Use from Wilderness Recommendation (miles) ⁶	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trails Closed to Motorized Use from Wilderness Recommendation (miles) ⁷	76	7	0	0	0	0	0
Recreation							
Projected Number of New Developed Recreation sites during Planning Period ¹	0	2	2	2	2	2	2
Projected Number of Recreation Facilities Maintained or Rehabilitated during Planning Period ¹	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Concentrated Use Areas Managed							
Ski Area Expansion	0	0	0	0	1-5	0	0
Oil and Gas Exploration and Development (Total for 10 year) planning period							
Projected New Oil and Gas Exploration Well Pads ⁴	2	2	4	0	7	4	5
Projected New Oil and Gas Fields Developed ⁵	0	0	1	0	1	1	1

¹ Source: K:\pao\forest_plan\deis\alternatives\comparison.assumptions_by_resource_area_03082001.doc

² VDDT model was used to estimate how vegetation would change over time. Estimates for prescribed fire, mechanical treatments, and harvest levels were based on budget constraints, mitigation requirements, standards and guidelines, and resources expected to be available to accomplish project planning.

³ Source: ASQ/TSPQ values from Appendix B-1, Vegetation Modeling.

⁴ AUM projections for Alternative 7 are based on 4.78 acres/AUM on satisfactory range, 6.70 acres/AUM on unsatisfactory range. For all other Alternatives AUM projections based on average of 4.78 acres/AUM on all suitable acres.

⁵ WORD memo from Julie Hubbard titled "Oil and Gas Activities for Specialists While Estimating Effects 07/24/02".

⁶ From GIS information compiled by Michael Barry.

⁷ From GIS EXCEL output file "miles_motorized_trails_rla_mp_alts" in K:\pao\forest_plan\deis\effects\gis_tables.

⁸ From GIS EXCEL output file "acres_ros_winter_forest_FINAL.xls" in

K:\pao\forest_plan\feis\acres_comparison_win_rec_al-ec_010903

⁹ 10% of these acres will be treated to return juniper to sagebrush dominance.

Table 2-3. Suitable Lands, Acres by Alternative

	Alternative						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Suited ¹ Lands for Aspen Timber Production	0	0	1,600	27,800	74,500	1,200	1,200
Suited ¹ Lands for Conifer Timber Production	0	0	36,400	166,100	151,500	27,700	27,700
Timber Harvest Allowed “Unsuited” ²	0	79,900	131,600	55,200	71,800	72,100	171,400
Forest-Wide Suitable Range Lands ³		251,900	299,700	300,100	300,100	288,300	288,300
Lands Available for Oil and Gas Leasing, ASZ ⁴	0	40,100	50,100	N/A	68,300	48,300	47,900
Lands Not Available for Oil and Gas Leasing, ASZ ⁴	68,300	28,200	18,200	N/A	0	20,000	20,400
Total Lands Available for Oil and Gas Leasing ⁵	140,400	180,500	190,500	140,400	208,700	188,700	188,300

¹ Suited by definition is only available capable lands within Prescription 5.2 or 6.2.

² Areas with characteristics conducive to timber harvest (capable and available), Prescriptions that allow timber harvest to meet other needs, but are “unsuited” by definition because they are not mapped with Prescription 5.2 or 6.2.

³ Table RN-4, FEIS Appendix B-9 provides discussion of basis for projections.

⁴ North Slope Appeal Settlement Zone area only.

⁵ North Slope Uinta Mountains, 1994 Leasing Decision plus Revised Forest Plan Decision.

Table 2-4. Acres of Summer Recreation Opportunity Classes Existing Conditions and Alternatives

ROS Category	Alternative and Existing Condition (EC)							
	1	2	3	4/1985	5	6	7	EC
Wilderness/Primitive ¹	36,500	36,500	36,500	307,500	36,500	36,500	36,500	36,500
Wilderness/SPNM ²	272,400	272,400	272,400	0	272,400	272,400	272,500	272,500
SPNM ³	556,200	436,300	392,100	241,900	308,400	411,800	416,100	416,100
SPM ⁴	135,800	188,700	223,600	85,600	268,800	201,400	276,800	276,800
RN(Roaded Natural)	234,600	301,500	311,100	545,600	349,300	313,400	227,900	233,600
Rural	720	720	720	13,600	720	720	6,400	720
Urban	144	144	144	0	144	144	144	144
NA ⁵	0	0	0	45,200	0	0	0	0
TOTAL ⁶	1,236,364	1,236,264	1,236,564	1,239,400	1,236,264	1,236,364	1,236,344	1,236,364

- 1 Wilderness (Prescription 1.1 only)
 2 Wilderness Classified as Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized
 3 Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized and Recommended Wilderness (Prescription 1.5)
 4 Semi-Primitive Motorized
 5 Lands acquired after 1985 Forest Plan
 6 Totals differ due to GIS mapping accuracy and rounding.

Table 2-5. Winter Recreation Opportunities Alternatives and Existing Condition

Winter Recreation	Acres of Existing Condition and Alternatives							
	1	2	3	4/1985	5	6	7 ¹	EC ²
Heli-skiing	0	0	12,000	17,000	17,000	17,000	17,000	17,000
Motorized	246,800	296,700	663,600	723,300	693,900	548,700	540,700	634,800
Non-Motorized	679,200	629,800	263,000	163,400	232,600	377,900	385,900	291,600
Wilderness	308,900	308,900	308,900	307,500	308,900	308,900	308,900	308,900

¹ Alt 7 Allows motorized use in areas currently open within Recommended Wilderness (Prescription 1.5)

² Existing Condition

Table 2-6. Inventoried Roadless Acres Disposition by Alternative

	Alternative (Acres)						
Acres in Prescriptions that:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Maintain ¹ Roadless Area Values Acres	606,000	546,200	366,900	0	7,200	191,200	188,700
Percent of Total Roadless	100%	90%	60%	0%	1%	32%	31%
Mostly Maintain ² Roadless Area Values Acres	0	39,200	58,100	131,900	109,900	389,400	267,400
Percent of Total Roadless	0%	7%	10%	22%	18%	64%	44%
Allow Development Acres	0	20,600	180,900	474,000	488,800	25,300	149,900
Percent of Total Roadless	0%	3%	30%	78%	81%	4%	25%

¹ No new road construction, timber harvest, new trail or recreation facilities construction, or mechanical fuels treatments allowed.

² No road construction and/or timber harvest allowed; New trail construction, minimal recreation facilities construction, and mechanical fuels treatments are allowed.

Table 2-7. Average Annual Employment by Program by Alternative (Decade 1)

Resource	Alternatives							
	Current	No Action	1	2	3	5	6	7
----- average annual employment, jobs -----								
Recreation/tourism	5,510	5,982	5,960	5,977	5,993	6,002	5,993	5,993
Wildlife and fish	80	88	88	88	88	88	88	88
Grazing	35	35	33	29	35	35	33	34
Wood products	60	60	0	18	25	63	33	37
Minerals	89	89	52	52	210	251	210	227
Forest Service expenditures	393	393	394	392	392	392	392	392
Total forest management	6,167	6,647	6,527	6,556	6,743	6,831	6,749	6,771
Percent change from current	---	8%	6%	6%	9%	11%	9%	10%

Source: MIG 2002.

Table 2-8. Labor Income estimated by Program by Alternative (Decade 1)

Resource	Alternatives							
	Current	No Action	1	2	3	5	6	7
----- average annual, in millions of dollars -----								
Recreation	108.2	117.6	117.0	117.4	117.8	117.9	117.8	117.8
Wildlife and Fish	1.6	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Grazing	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Wood products	1.4	1.4	0.0	0.4	0.6	1.4	0.8	0.8
Minerals	4.5	4.5	2.6	2.6	10.6	12.6	10.6	11.4
Forest Service expenditures	12.4	12.4	12.4	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5
Total forest management	128.6	138.2	134.3	135.1	143.8	146.7	144.0	144.8
Percent change from current	---	7%	4%	5%	12%	14%	12%	13%

Source: MIG 2002.

The Preferred Alternative

The Regional Forester has selected Alternative 7 as the decision (selected) alternative.