APPENDIX B. MINNESOTA NATIONAL FORESTS ROS MAPPING CRITERIA

Introduction

The Forest Service uses a nationally recognized classification system called the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) to help describe different recreation settings, opportunities, and experiences. Recreation settings vary from primitive – where there is little evidence of other people, more difficult access, and more opportunities for self-reliance – to more developed rural areas which offer more facilities, better access, and opportunities to interact with other recreationists. The glossary describes the characterizations of each ROS class. Further ROS information and direction can be found in Forest Service Handbooks and Manuals and in particular the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service *ROS Users Guide* August 1982.

Inventory Criteria

The 1986 Forest Plans used national inventory mapping criteria that resulted in classification of a high percentage of the roaded natural Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Class within the National Forest boundaries. Since that time the Chippewa National Forest has modified the national inventory criteria to reflect northern Minnesota forest's unique landscapes in providing recreation opportunities. The modified criteria are called the Minnesota National Forests ROS mapping criteria.

This appendix includes the criteria necessary to inventory areas for project-level planning as referenced in the guideline relating to retention of remote character in General Forest, Longer Rotation, and Recreation in a Scenic Landscape Management Areas. The criteria will also be useful for comparison of the 2002 ROS inventory prepared for the Forest Plans with the overall amounts of each ROS class throughout the Forests in the future.

Table BFP-1 summarizes the principal inventory mapping criteria: distance from roads and size. All lands within the National Forest boundaries are mapped. Areas up to two miles outside the boundaries need to be included in order to apply results of the criteria within the National Forest boundaries. The features used in the distance from criteria are further defined below.

Paved roads	Generally meets the definition of OML 5 roads
Gravel roads	Generally meets the definition of OML 3 and 4 roads
Native soil roads	Generally meets the definition of OML 1 and 2 roads. (The CNF had a way to directly select these roads)
Motorized lakes	Lakes with a drive down ramp access.
Motorized trails	Designated snowmobile and ATV trails.

In addition, the following statements clarify how Rural and Urban areas were mapped.

1. Districts identified Urban areas using the ROS handbook descriptions. They either mapped the city limits or drew ¼ miles buffers around population centers.
2. Districts identified Rural areas using the ROS handbook descriptions.
   SNF: Rural was also mapped ¼ mile around Urban areas.
3. Railroads and utilities were mapped Rural ¼ mile on each side.
4. Mines were mapped Rural.
5. Portions of major highways as identified by Districts were mapped Rural ¼ miles on each side.

BFP-1. Minnesota National Forests ROS Mapping Criteria – Distance from roads, trails, or lakes and Size

Criteria	Units	ROS Class			
		Primitive	Semi-primitive Non-motorized	Semi-primitive Motorized	Roaded Natural
Distance					
Paved Road	miles	> 2	> 0.50	> 0.50	< 0.50
Gravel Road	miles	> 2	> 0.50	> 0.25	< 0.25
Native Soil Road	miles	> 2	> 0.50	No buffer	No buffer
Motorized Lakes	miles	> 2	> 0.25	< 0.25	N/A
Motorized Trails	miles	> 2	> 0.50	< 0.25	< 0.25*
Size	acres	> 2,500	> 1,500	> 1,500	No minimum

Source: Project file.
* Most SNF snowmobile trail corridors were mapped SPM ¼ miles each side. Therefore, a total ½ miles SPM corridor was mapped for most snowmobile trails.