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Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area Management Plan



Forest Service

Intermountain Region

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Land Management Plan for the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area

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List of Abbreviations

Acronym or Abbreviation

Full Term

BOR	U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation
FGNRA	Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area
forest plan.....	Ashley National Forest Land Management Plan
LMP	Land Management Plan
LTA	Land Type Association
HCB	harmful cyanobacteria blooms
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NPS	U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service
NRHP.....	National Register of Historic Places
REA	Recreation Enhancement Act

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Purpose of Plan

Congress designated the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (FGNRA) in 1968 by the enactment of Public Law 90-540. The purpose of this enabling legislation was for the purpose of the Colorado River Storage Project; public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment of the Flaming Gorge Reservoir and surrounding lands in the states of Utah and Wyoming; and the conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment of the lands and waters. The legislation establishing the FGNRA specified three broad missions and management goals. Specifically, the Secretary of Agriculture is directed to “administer, protect, and develop the FGNRA in a manner to best provide for:

1. Public outdoor recreation benefits;
2. Conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment;
3. And such management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources as in his judgment will promote or are compatible with, and do not significantly impair the purpose for which the recreation area is established.”

The enabling legislation extended the boundaries of the Ashley National Forest and withdrew lands from location, entry, and patent under U.S. mining laws subject to valid existing rights. The legislation did not change the authority for operation of the Colorado River Storage Project, which continues to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior.

The Ashley National Forest recently revised their 1986 Land and Resource Management Plan under the 2012 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219) with the 2024 Land Management Plan (LMP). The FGNRA designated area section of the 2024 LMP (pages 71-74) describes a framework for managing the FGNRA in accordance with the enabling legislation. However, the conditions of the FGNRA have changed since the land and resource management plan was prepared. There is a need to update the existing management direction to account for changed conditions. The purpose of this management plan is to provide strategic guidance for future management of the FGNRA. It will provide a basis for informed decision-making while guiding resource management.

Plan Area

The FGNRA plan area includes all National Forest Systems lands within the boundaries of the recreation area, approximately 207,363 acres. Decisions under this management plan apply only to the plan area.

Management Planning Overview

Land management planning is an adaptive process that includes plan development, monitoring, and adjustment based on desired social, economic, and ecological conditions and the evaluation of impacts to those conditions. The overall purpose of planning is to ensure land management based on current information that guides land stewardship to best meet the needs of the public.

Relationship to Other Planning Documents

The 1986 Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan has been revised under the 2012 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219) and the final plan decision for the revised Land Management Plan (LMP) was signed on January 26, 2024. The Ashley NF LMP became effective as of February 26, 2024. The FGNRA Management Plan will be adopted into the 2024 Ashley LMP as a programmatic (plan-level) amendment, consistent with the applicable LMP direction (see Appendix B to the Environmental Assessment).

Scope and Applicability

The FGNRA Management Plan applies to all National Forest System lands and activities within the boundaries of the FGNRA. It provides a framework for informed resource management decisions. Future projects conducted by the Forest Service or stakeholders would align with the desired conditions, objectives, standards, guidelines, goals, and management approaches outlined in this plan to fulfill the FGNRA Management Plan's vision. New projects may require additional public involvement, site-specific studies, and separate decisions; however, these projects would be guided by this Management Plan and the forest plan.

The FGNRA Management Plan does not modify the enabling legislation, valid and existing rights, or existing authorities, such as operation of the Colorado River Storage Project, by the Secretary of the Interior. In addition, the Management Plan does not change or reiterate other existing laws, regulations, and policy.

Plan Structure

The Plan Area direction (see chapter 2) provides a strategic and practical framework for managing the plan area. The components apply to the resources and issues of the plan area and reflect the plan area's distinctive roles and contributions.

The following description of management direction comes from the 2012 Planning Rule at 36 CFR 219.7(e).

- A **desired condition** is a description of specific social, economic, or ecological characteristics, toward which management of the land and resources should be directed. Desired conditions must be described in terms that are specific enough to allow progress toward their achievement but not include completion dates. The Forest Service intends to move toward these desired conditions over the next 15 years, although they may take many decades to achieve.
- An **objective** is a concise, measurable, and time-specific statement of a desired rate of progress toward a desired condition or conditions. Objectives should be based on reasonably foreseeable budgets. Objectives will be reached over the life of the forest plan, considered to be over the first 15 years of its implementation, unless otherwise specified.
- A **standard** is a mandatory constraint on project and activity decision-making. A standard is established to help achieve or maintain the desired condition or conditions, to avoid or mitigate undesirable effects, or to meet applicable legal requirements.
- A **guideline** is a constraint on project and activity decision-making that allows for departure from its terms so long as the purpose of the guideline is met. Guidelines are established to help achieve or maintain a desired condition or conditions, to avoid or mitigate undesirable effects, or to meet applicable legal requirements.

- A **goal** is optional plan content and a broad statement of intent, usually related to process or interaction with the public. Goals are expressed in broad, general terms, and also do not include completion dates. They may be used to describe overall desired conditions that also depend on conditions beyond the Forest Service's authority.
- The **suitability** of specific lands within a plan area identified for various uses or activities based on the desired conditions applicable to those lands. The lands are identified as suitable or not suitable for various uses or activities based on desired conditions applicable to those lands. The suitability of lands need not be identified for every use or activity. If certain lands are identified as not suitable for a use, then that use or activity may not be authorized.
- Adaptive management is the general framework encompassing the three phases of planning: assessment, plan development, and monitoring (36 CFR 219.5). This framework supports decision-making that meets management objectives while simultaneously accruing information to improve future management by adjusting the plan or plan implementation. Adaptive management is a structured, cyclical process for planning and decision-making in the face of uncertainty and changing conditions with feedback from monitoring, which includes using the planning process to actively test assumption, track relevant conditions over time, and measure management effectiveness

In addition to management direction described above, the FGNRA management plan also provides supplemental management approaches. These management approaches describe potential management strategies, and coordination activities that may take place at the project or activity level to help maintain existing conditions or to achieve the desired conditions described in the plan.

Overview of the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area

The FGNRA is in Daggett County in northeastern Utah and Sweetwater County in southwestern Wyoming. Congress designated the area in 1968 by the enactment of Public Law 90-540 for the purpose of the Colorado River Storage Project, public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment of the Flaming Gorge Reservoir and surrounding lands in the states of Utah and Wyoming, and the conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment of the lands and waters. See the Purpose of the Plan section for additional details of the legislation establishing the national recreation area.

The FGNRA covers 207,363 acres and includes 91 water miles, encompassing the 42,020-acre reservoir. The area is divided by the Utah/Wyoming state line. The Utah side contains approximately 43 reservoir water miles, 111,213 acres of the FGNRA, and 13 miles of the Green River below the Flaming Gorge Dam. The Wyoming side contains approximately 48 reservoir and river water miles and 96,149 acres of the FGNRA. The FGNRA is best known for its scenery, geology, and recreation opportunities. The recreation opportunities include fishing on the Flaming Gorge Reservoir and the Green River, which attract visitors from across the United States. Overall, the FGNRA has the greatest development of recreation facilities on the Ashley National Forest. These facilities support water- and road-based recreation opportunities.

The FGNRA also includes areas such as the Green River corridor below the Flaming Gorge Dam, Red Canyon, Firehole Canyon, Antelope Flat, Sheep Creek Bay, Hideout Canyon, Kingfisher Island, and many other unique areas and opportunities for motorized and nonmotorized recreation. Multiple developed and dispersed camping settings and opportunities are available as well. These opportunities include lake and river fishing, boating, sailing, waterskiing, mountain biking, hiking, ice fishing, rafting, hunting, and scenic byways and backways.

Two management challenges are likely to persist in the FGNRA lands flanking the Flaming Gorge Reservoir. The first challenge stems from the need to maintain and expand recreation opportunities around the reservoir to support local economies. The FGNRA is an important economic driver for Utah and Wyoming and needs to be managed to maintain its natural setting and scenic beauty, while accommodating growing recreational demands and increasing economic importance to the region. The public and local governments advocate for the use of public lands to both continue and expand developed and dispersed recreation sites and motorized access.

The second management challenge is managing sensitive resources and impacts on these resources from other land uses. Unmanaged recreation can leave increasing and persistent footprints in fragile desert ecosystems, with the highest impacts resulting from dispersed camping and off-road or “open-use” of off-highway vehicles. Unmanaged recreation on the south end of the FGNRA, would include overcrowding of developed recreation sites and deterioration of developed recreation infrastructure. Vegetation, soil, wildlife and watershed resources can be affected. Damage to natural resources around the Flaming Gorge Reservoir includes loss of vegetation, wildlife habitat impacts, compaction and displacement of soils, reduced water infiltration, and increased erosion. The low-lying areas surrounding the reservoir are in an arid environment with an annual precipitation of approximately 6 to 9 inches. These conditions reduce the landscape’s resilience to recover from land disturbances.

Chapter 2. Resource Inventory

The following section provides an overview of planning area conditions and trends by resource. Travel and transportation information is included in the Recreation and Facilities section.

Cultural Resources

In 1968, Congress established the FG NRA for specific purposes, including the conservation of historic values (Public Law 90-540). Congress defined historic resources as “any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places” (National Historic Preservation Act of 1966; 16 U.S.C. 470w, Section 301). The cultural and historic legacy of the lands within the recreation area began with indigenous people thousands of years ago and continues to the present day. Cultural and historic resources are the tangible remains of past human activities and events that help provide an understanding of and context to the past. Cultural and historic resources can connect people to the land.

Prehistoric / Indigenous Period

Indigenous people have used the lands within the FG NRA for thousands of years. The numerous springs and creeks flowing from the benches of the Uinta Mountains provided abundant habitat for a variety of plants, animals, and other resources that were used for food, clothing, housing, and spiritual connection. The Green River and associated riparian and wetland habitats provided important resources across a broad swath of desert in southwestern Wyoming.

Indigenous people left behind evidence that is documented through archaeological investigation. Over 1,100 prehistoric cultural resource sites have been found within the boundary of the FG NRA, and it is anticipated that hundreds more undocumented cultural resource sites are in the area. These archaeological resources provide evidence that indigenous people have used the area now designated as the FG NRA since at least 6,000 B.C (8,000 years ago). Evidence of habitations, tools, food storage, campsites, and other artifacts on the landscape show that many locations within the FG NRA were heavily used by indigenous people.

Examples of prehistoric cultural resources within the FG NRA include rock art sites, prehistoric habitation areas, corn storage features, basket storage sites, wickiup shelters, hunting blinds, and prehistoric campsites. The Flaming Gorge area also has multiple locations that contain prehistoric artifacts where native people left evidence of a variety of activities, such as flaking local cherts and quartzite cobbles to make a variety of tools for hunting, food processing, and other needs. Table 1 shows the broad types of prehistoric cultural resources known to be within the FG NRA. Locations of prehistoric sites are shown in figure 1.

Table 1. Types of Prehistoric Cultural Resource Sites within the FG NRA

Rock Shelter	Basket	Corn Storage Feature
Artifact Scatter	Cave Shelter	Slab lined Basin
Habitation Site	Fire Hearth	Slab Stone Cist
Rock Art	Lithic Tool Concentration	Hunting Blind
Lithic Scatter	Ash Stain	Rock Rings / Stone Circles
Open Camp	Lithic Quarry	Roasting Pits

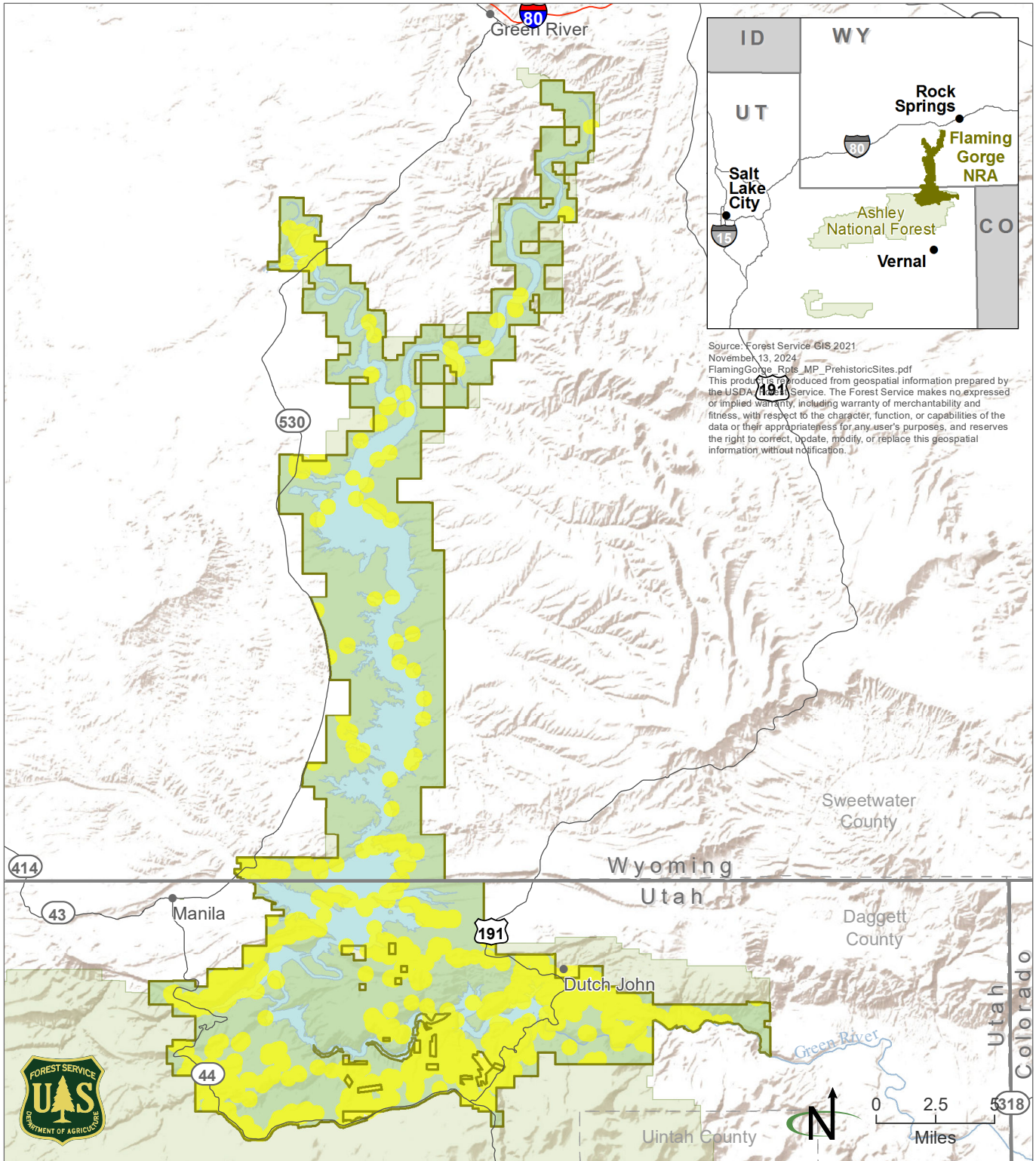


Figure 1, Prehistoric Sites

- Area with documented prehistoric resource value
- Flaming Gorge NRA
- Ashley National Forest

Historic Period

The earliest written history describes the Ute and Eastern Shoshone people who are the descendants of indigenous inhabitants of the area. The Ute people (or Nuche) and the Eastern Shoshone people (or Newe) have had a cultural connectivity with the land for many generations and they continue to maintain that connection. The FGNRA is situated in the traditional homelands of both the Eastern Shoshone and Ute Indian Tribes. These areas provide a cultural connectivity for both tribes and give them access to resources that are important for cultural, ceremonial, and subsistence practices. Traditionally, the Ute and Eastern Shoshone people hunted and gathered native plants and animals and had highly mobile family groups. In addition to the Ute and Eastern Shoshone Tribes, other indigenous tribes may also have oral or cultural traditions that indicate use of the areas within the boundaries of what became the FGNRA.

The year 1492 commenced a period of massive changes across the American continents that introduced European trade goods, plants, animals, and diseases that were forces of change not completely understood. Indigenous people maintained many cultural traditions and practices, but the introduction of European influences, including the introduction of the horse in the early 1700s, began to change their traditional lifestyles. The early 1800s saw an increase in trade between Euro-American traders and indigenous people, especially as traded beaver pelts became more valuable because of fashion trends in Europe.

In 1848, Mexico relinquished its claim on lands occupied by indigenous people, and the lands were then claimed by the United States of America. The United States had been promoting westward expansion through various homestead acts and the claim to these new lands ignited a frenzy of expansion and development by Euro-American pioneers, homesteaders, miners, sheep herders, and cattlemen. The arrival of thousands of Euro-Americans into traditional Ute and Eastern Shoshone lands set off numerous conflicts between the new arrivals and the indigenous people living in the area. The U.S. Government attempted to resolve the conflicts by establishing treaties with the Ute and Eastern Shoshone people and then moving them to reservations. Most treaties were heavily one sided toward the U.S. expansion goals and were often crafted with little or no input from indigenous representatives. In the 1860s, all Ute Indians within the Territory of Utah were moved to the Uintah Valley Reservation in the Uinta Basin under a treaty signed in 1865. The reservation was later expanded when the Uncompahgre Band of the Ute Indians was moved from Colorado into Utah's Uinta Basin. In 1863 and 1869, treaties with the Eastern Shoshone relinquished much of their traditional homelands and limited their tribal lands to the Wind River Valley in the Territory of Wyoming. Even though the FGNRA does not overlap current tribal reservation lands with the Ute Indian Tribe or the Eastern Shoshone Tribe, many places of traditional importance for indigenous tribes are located within the FGNRA.

Explorers, pioneers, miners, and settlers of European descent arrived in the area in the mid-1800s. They utilized the lands within the FGNRA for a variety of uses, including sawmills, canals, dams, livestock grazing, and the development of towns and farmlands near the Green River.

The transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, and the rail line opened up myriads of additional opportunities for settlement, trade, and commerce. That same year, John Wesley Powell floated and mapped the Green River through Red Canyon and coined the term "Flaming Gorge" for the area where the Green River enters the Uinta Mountains.

In the 1880s, Lewis Allen, Cleophis Dowd, and the Green family began ranching on the benches above the Red Canyon.

On February 22, 1897, President Grover Cleveland created the Uintah Forest Reserve, which covered 842,000 acres, mostly on the North Slope of the Uinta Mountains, including the Red Canyon and Greendale Bench areas of what would later be incorporated into the FGNRA. The creation of the Uinta Forest Reserve cancelled homestead claims within the reserve boundaries and removed the ability to file new homestead claims on the land.

A public uproar over the closure of agricultural lands within the Forest Reserves convinced congress to pass several Forest Homestead Acts between 1903 and 1906, which allowed for homesteading within Forest Reserves where nontimbered land could be shown to be primarily “agricultural” in nature.

On July 1, 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt signed Executive Order 884, creating the Ashley National Forest by carving it out of the eastern portion of the Uintah Forest Reserve.

On April 11, 1956, the Colorado River Storage Project Act was passed by congress with the aim to develop and manage water resources in the Upper Colorado River Basin states of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. Flaming Gorge Dam was to be the northernmost water impoundment feature of this ambitious project. The dams were to provide river regulation, use of river allocations, arid land reclamation, flood control, recreation, improved conditions for fish and wildlife, and the production of hydroelectric power. Ultimately, the Colorado River Storage Act resulted in the creation of two massive reservoirs: Lake Powell, upstream of Glen Canyon Dam, and Flaming Gorge. The Colorado River Act had initially planned for a third dam, proposed for Echo Park along the Colorado-Utah border, but that location ignited opposition and controversy, which put an end to the proposal.

In 1958, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), began building Flaming Gorge Dam. This effort included the construction of the town of Dutch John, built to provide a housing community for the workers building the dam. For the reservoir, the BOR took control of hundreds of thousands of acres of lands formerly held by the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, or private owners who were dismayed to have their property condemned under eminent domain.

In anticipation of the increase in visitation that a massive desert reservoir would draw, the Forest Service began to plan and build recreational and administrative facilities near Red Canyon. The BOR in turn, signed an agreement with the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS) to plan, develop, and operate recreational facilities on the BOR lands around the reservoir. Tensions arose between the NPS and the Forest Service when the NPS attempted to extend their authority onto Forest Service land. On January 31, 1962, a formal letter signed by the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior designated that the Forest Service would continue to manage the area within the Ashley National Forest and the NPS would administer the remainder of the reservoir. Nicknamed the “Treaty of the Potomac,” the truce lasted a few years while the NPS continued to plan for a broader congressionally designated National Recreation Area to be managed by the NPS.

In response to the NPS attempt to take over the management of recreation on the Flaming Gorge Reservoir, the Forest Service began their own recreational development plan to demonstrate to congress that their agency was the better administrator for recreation on the reservoir and to prepare for the anticipated upsurge in visitation. The Forest Service began to design plans for recreational sites near the slowly filling reservoir. In 1964, the Forest Service constructed the Red Canyon Visitor Center on a promontory with stunning views of Red Canyon in an attempt to imitate a typical NPS Mission 66 visitor center of the time.

The construction of the Flaming Gorge Dam was completed late in 1962, and the first turbine of the internal power system generated power in 1963. The event drew national attention. Claudia “Ladybird”

Johnson, wife of President Lyndon B. Johnson, officiated at the dedication on August 17, 1964, during the Vietnam War. The NPS and the Forest Service continued with their separate recreation developments until October 1, 1968, when Congress formally created the FGNRA, designated management to the Secretary of Agriculture, and delegated administration to the Forest Service. The expansion of the recreation area increased the Ashley National Forest by 113,800 acres and included the former NPS recreation complexes of Antelope Flat, Buckboard, and Lucerne.

Many of the historic uses of the lands within the National Recreation Area left evidence of their activities and endeavors. Historic activities include transportation, irrigation canals, livestock grazing, mining, timber extraction, timber milling, recreation, hunting, fishing, and Forest Service management.

Over 105 historic resource sites have been documented within the boundary of the FGNRA, and it is anticipated that many more undocumented historic resource sites are in the area. Table 2 shows the broad types of known historic resources within the FGNRA. Site locations are shown in figure 2.

Table 2. Types of Historic Resource Sites within the FGNRA

Road	Visitor Center	Sawmill
Fence	Homestead	Cabin
Debris Scatter	Dam	Powerline
Campground	Trail	Canal
Corral	Building	Structure
Inscription	Ranch	–

Conservation and public enjoyment of Cultural and Historic Resources

The FGNRA legislation specifies the mission to conserve cultural and historic values while emphasizing that those resources should contribute to public enjoyment. Other laws, such as the National Historic Preservation Act and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act also emphasize the protection of cultural and historic resources and their value to provide information, interpretation, and education to the public. Because of these overlapping legislative mandates, the Flaming Gorge NRA is an ideal location for the interpretation of cultural and historic resources and for the encouragement of heritage tourism. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act and implementing regulations prohibit the damage, destruction, collection, or alteration of cultural or historic resources.

Table 3 shows the number of cultural resources that have been documented within the FGNRA as well as their National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility.

Table 3. Number of Cultural Resource Sites in the FGNRA

Cultural Resource Site Type	NRHP Eligibility	Quantity
Prehistoric	Eligible / Listed	519
	Not Eligible / Destroyed	503
	Unevaluated	105
	Total Prehistoric	1127
Historic	Eligible / Listed	16
	Not Eligible / Destroyed	76
	Unevaluated	13
	Total Historic	105
Total Cultural Resource Sites in the FGNRA*		1232

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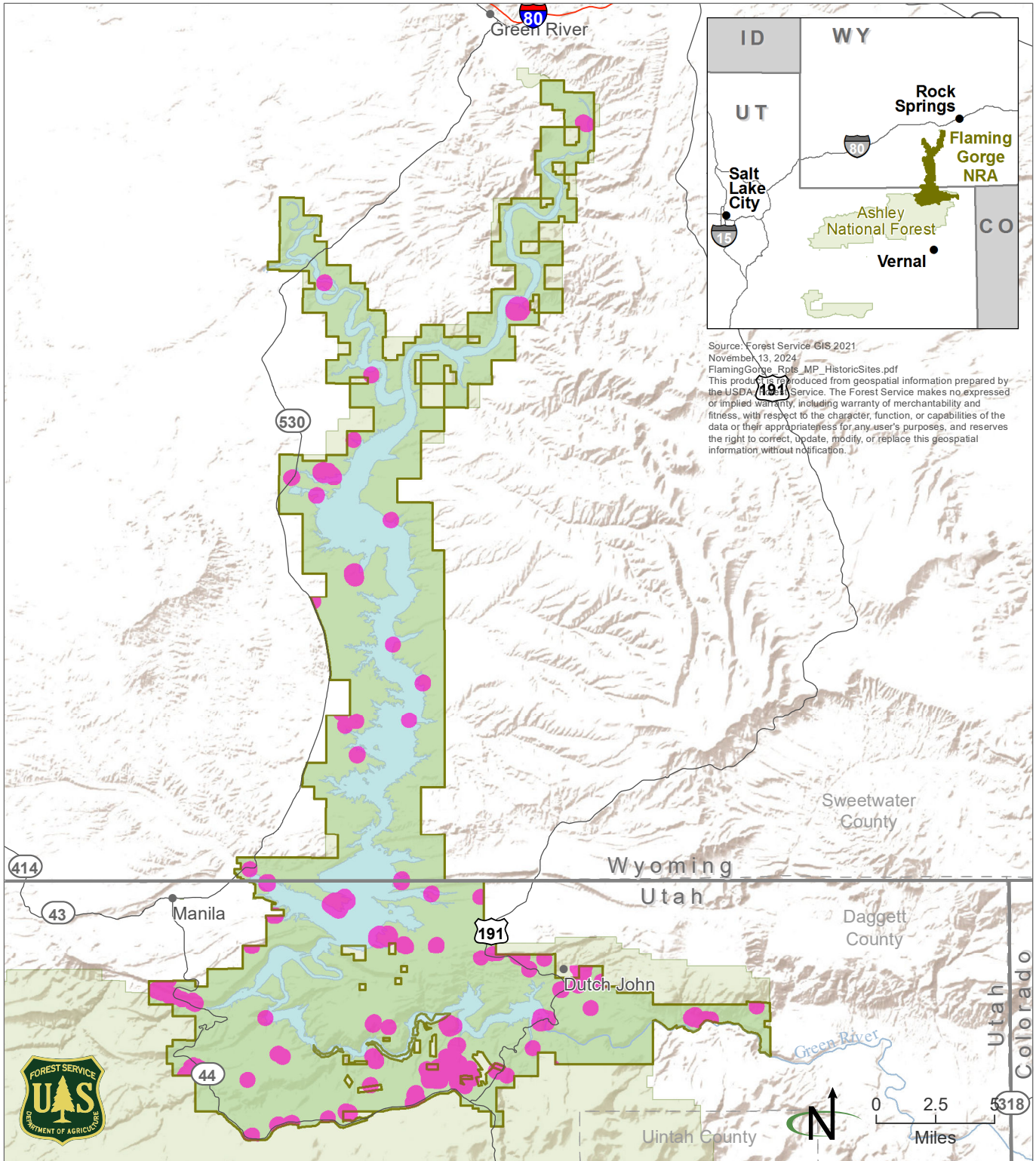


Figure 2, Historic Sites

- Area with documented historic resource values
- Flaming Gorge NRA
- Ashley National Forest

Fire and Fuels

The FGNRA is home to a significant number of values at risk¹. Of primary concern is the Flaming Gorge Dam located in Daggett County in Northeastern Utah. This feature serves as the foundation of this geographic area and provides an economic core for the area that supports and justifies many of the other values located there. The Dutch John community is a significant value at risk that is dependent on Flaming Gorge Reservoir. Other communities in the area are the Pines and Acres residential subdivisions, located south of Flaming Gorge Dam, and Manila, Utah, which is west of the reservoir. Green River is a larger community that is adjacent to the northern tip of the area in Sweetwater County, Wyoming.

Forest Service infrastructure in the FGNRA is abundant and represents significant value manifested through campgrounds, water treatment plants, guard stations, boating docks and other water amenities, vault toilets, and many other features primarily related to recreation opportunity within the FGNRA. The Red Canyon Visitor Center is located on the western edge of the reservoir and is a highly trafficked recreation facility for Ashley National Forest.

Industry utilizes the FGNRA and also has infrastructure in the area. Various concessionaires are located throughout the area; Red Canyon Lodge, Flaming Gorge Resort, and Flaming Gorge Lodge are tourist destinations in the FGNRA; marinas and restaurants are scattered around the reservoir; and utility infrastructure is present with oil, gas, fiber optic, and electrical transmission lines.

For information on fuels, see the Vegetation section below.

Fish and Wildlife

The FGNRA is home to a variety of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife. Some of those species include regional forester-listed species of conservation concern (SCC). Forest Service-listed SCC are defined as those plant and animal species identified by a regional forester for which population viability is a concern, as evidenced by:

- “significant current or predicted downward trends in population numbers or density, or
- significant current or predicted downward trends in habitat capability that would reduce a species’ existing distribution” (Forest Service 2005). Table 4 presents many of the typical terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species found within the FGNRA and special status species that occur there and the type of habitats they prefer or in which they are found.

An overview of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species, including those with SCC status, is included in table 4.

Table 4. Typical Animal Species, Special Status, and Habitat of Wildlife within the FGNRA

Species	Status	Habitat
<i>Antilocapra americana</i> Pronghorn	–	Sagebrush/grassland
<i>Ovis canadensis</i> Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep	–	Mountainous terrain, alpine meadows, rocky outcrops

¹ Values at Risk are defined as the elements of a community or natural area considered valuable by an individual or community that could be negatively impacted by a wildfire or wildfire operations.

Species	Status	Habitat
<i>Alces alces</i> Moose	–	Wet meadow, mixed conifer, aspen
<i>Cervus canadensis nelson</i> Rocky Mountain elk	–	Mountain brush, woodlands, mixed conifer, aspen, alpine
<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i> Mule deer	–	Mountain brush, woodlands, mixed conifer, aspen, alpine
<i>Ursus americanus</i> Black bear	–	Mountain brush, woodlands, mixed conifer, aspen, alpine
<i>Puma concolor</i> Mountain lion	–	Mountain brush, woodlands, mixed conifer, aspen, rocky outcrops
<i>Lynx rufus</i> Bobcat	–	Mountain brush, woodlands, mixed conifer, aspen,
<i>Canis latrans</i> Coyote	–	Mountain brush, woodlands, mixed conifer, aspen, alpine
<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i> Red squirrel	–	Mixed conifer, aspen
<i>Martes martes</i> Pine marten	–	Mixed conifer, aspen
<i>Lepus townsendii</i> White-tailed jackrabbit	–	Mountain brush
<i>Lepus americanus</i> Snowshoe hare	–	Mountain brush, woodlands, mixed conifer, aspen, alpine
<i>Brachylagus idahoensis</i> Pygmy Rabbit	SCC	Mountain brush, open grasslands, burrow systems
<i>Meles meles</i> Badger	–	Mountain brush, grassland
<i>Mustela</i> Weasel	–	Mountain brush, grassland
<i>Mephitis mephitis</i> Striped skunk	–	Mountain brush, grassland, riparian
<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i> Greater Sage-grouse	SCC	Sagebrush, grassland
<i>Leucosticte atrata</i> Black Rosy-Finch	SCC	Alpine, subalpine
<i>Dendragapus obscurus</i> Dusky grouse	–	Mixed conifer, aspen
<i>Bonasa umbellus</i> Ruffed grouse	–	Mixed conifer, aspen
<i>Lagopus leucura</i> White-tailed ptarmigan	–	Alpine
<i>Accipiter gentilis</i> Northern goshawk	–	Mixed conifer, aspen, mature forest
<i>Falco peregrinus</i> Peregrine falcon	SCC	Cliffs, riparian
<i>Psiloscops flammeolus</i> Flammulated owl	–	Mixed conifer
<i>Picoides dorsalis</i> Three-toed woodpecker	–	Mixed conifer, aspen

Species	Status	Habitat
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i> Fringed Myotis	SCC	Woodlands, riparian, caves and crevices
<i>Euderma maculatum</i> Spotted bat	–	Forested, open canyons, cliffs, riparian
<i>Myotis lucifugus</i> Little brown bat	–	Mixed conifer/riparian
<i>Crotalus oreganus concolor</i> Midget-faded rattlesnake	–	Desert rocky outcrops
<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i> Garter snake	–	Riparian
<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i> Colorado River cutthroat trout	SCC	Aquatic
<i>Salmo trutta</i> Brown trout	–	Aquatic
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> Rainbow trout	–	Aquatic
<i>Salvelinus fontinalis</i> Brook trout	–	Aquatic
<i>Cottus bairdii</i> Mottled sculpin	–	Aquatic
<i>Catostomus platyrhynchus</i> Mountain sucker	–	Aquatic
<i>Catostomus discobolus</i> Bluehead sucker	SCC	Aquatic
<i>Catostomus latipinnis</i> Flannelmouth sucker	SCC	Aquatic
<i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i> Kokanee salmon	–	Aquatic
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> Lake trout	–	Aquatic
<i>Micropterus dolomieu</i> Smallmouth bass	–	Aquatic
<i>Prosopium williamsoni</i> Mountain whitefish	–	Aquatic
<i>Oreohelix eurekensis</i> Eureka Mountain Snail	SCC	High-elevation, coniferous Forests
<i>Pseudacris maculate</i> Boreal chorus frog	–	Aquatic/semiaquatic
<i>Lithobates pipiens</i> Northern leopard frog	–	Aquatic/semiaquatic

Interpretation

The FGNRA offers opportunities for connecting people with the environment and the natural and cultural history of the area. These connections provide opportunities for the development of strong stewardship ethics in the form of personally delivered talks and programs, brochures and booklets, and interpretive wayside exhibits using digital and other formats.

Table 5 presents information on developed interpretive sites on the FGNRA, including the name and type of site. Figure 3 shows locations of interpretive sites.

Table 5. Education and Interpretation Sites

Site Name	Site Type
Antelope Flat	Scenic Byway Interpretive Site
Bootleg	Amphitheater
Canyon Rim Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Cedar Springs Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Byway Interpretive Site
Dowd Mountain Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Firehole	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Flaming Gorge Dam	Visitor Center (BOR managed)
Flaming Gorge Dam Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site (BOR managed)
Greendale	Interpretive Site
Greendale Junction	Scenic Byway Interpretive Site
Greendale Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Byway Interpretive Site
Linwood Bay Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Little Hole Observation Point	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Lucerne Valley	Amphitheater
Mustang Ridge	Amphitheater
Red Canyon	Visitor Center
Red Canyon Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Trail
Sheep Creek Bay Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Byway Interpretive Site
Sheep Creek Nature Tail	Scenic Byway Interpretive Trail
Swett Ranch	Historical Site
West Greens Lake	Scenic Byway Interpretive Trail

Geology and Minerals

The FGNRA has a variety of geologic resources and hazards. The hazards include landslides, rockfalls, flooding, debris flows, and earthquakes. Geologic resources within the FGNRA include many types and ages of fossils and areas with scenic or scientifically important rock layers or features. Main geology features are displayed in figure 4. Significant fossils and related resources are protected by Federal laws and regulations. Fossil resources are both fragile and nonrenewable, and special considerations are required to provide appropriate resource protection and scientific opportunities. Locations and details of significant fossil sites are considered sensitive information and should be protected from inappropriate public disclosure. Geologic hazards and resources within the FGNRA are already managed across the entire Ashley National Forest and do not require any additional planning or restrictions specifically within the FGNRA.

Energy and mineral resources provide the raw materials that support and contribute to all aspects of modern society and technology. Part of the Forest Service's mission is to encourage, facilitate, and administer the orderly exploration, development, and production of mineral and energy resources on National Forest System lands to help meet the present and future needs of the Nation. Existing Federal and local laws, regulations, and legal decisions guide much of how or if particular minerals and energy management actions should take place. This document does not need to reiterate overarching Federal and local laws, regulations, and policies that must already be implemented.

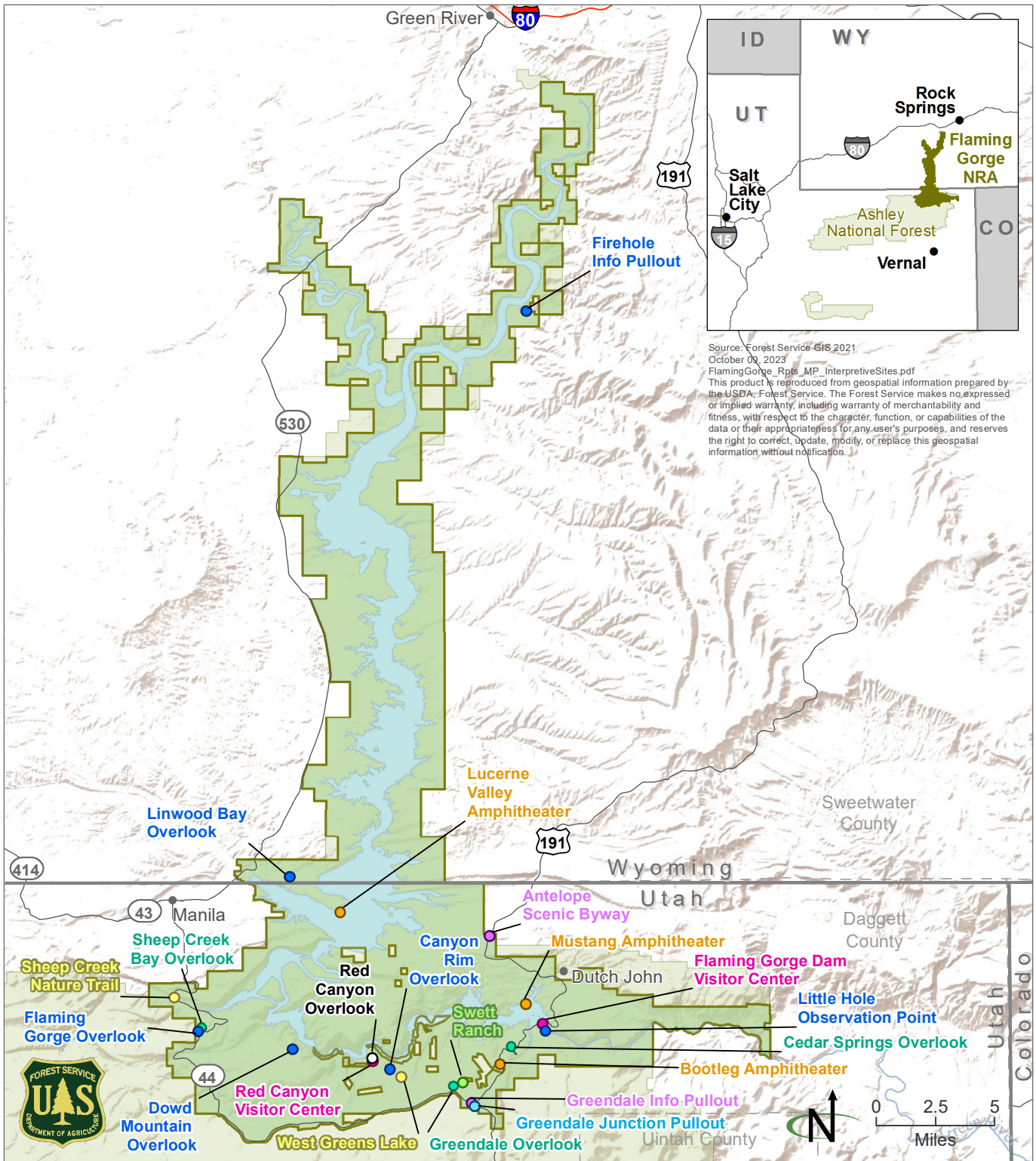


Figure 3, Interpretive Sites

- | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Scenic Overlook | Scenic Byway | ● Amphitheater | ■ Flaming Gorge NRA |
| ● Interpretive site | ● Interpretive site | ● Visitors center | ■ Ashley National Forest |
| ○ Interpretive trail | ● Interpretive trail | ● Historical site | |
| | Scenic Overlook and Byway interpretive site | ● Interpretive site | |

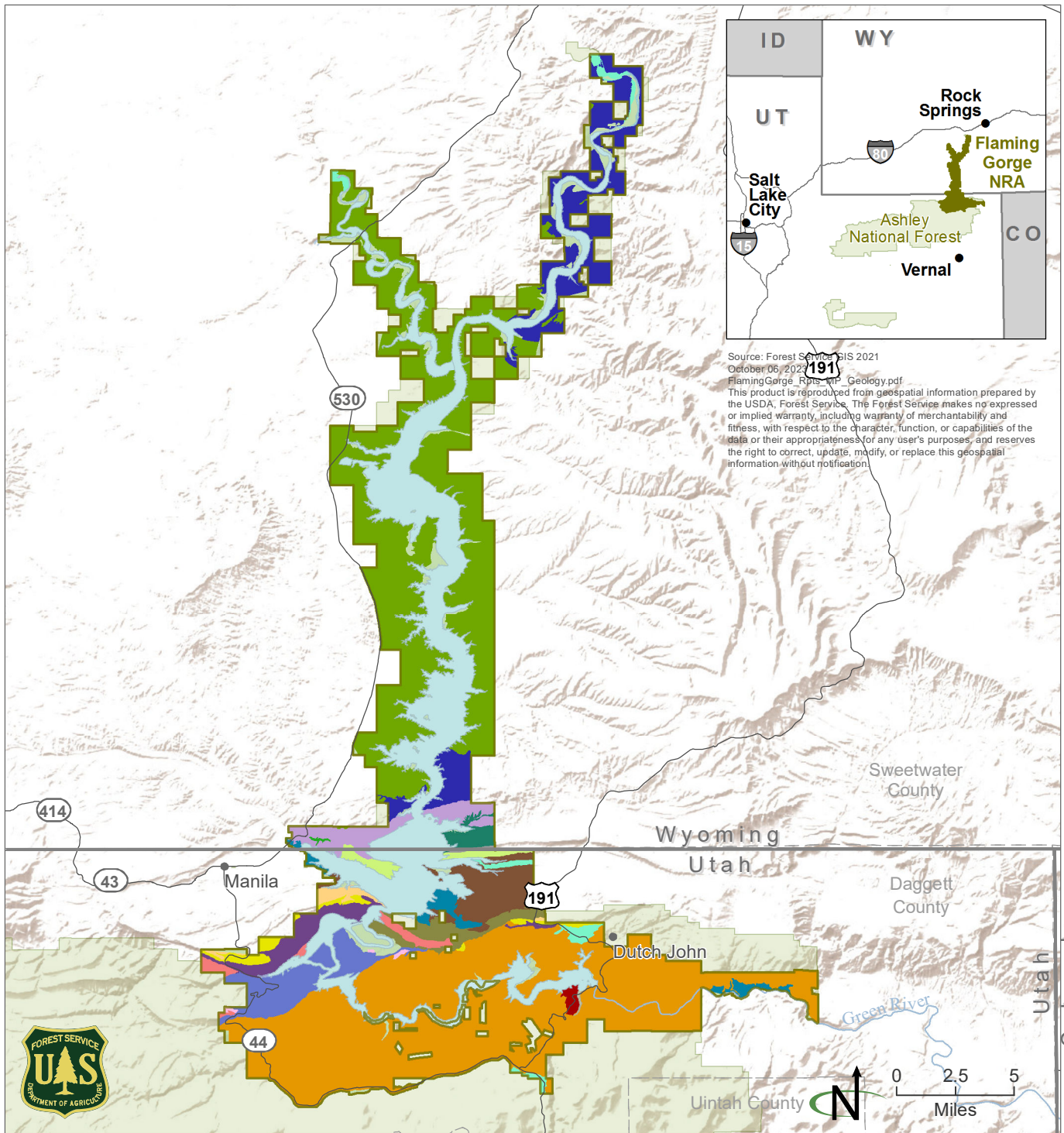


Figure 4, Geology

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Green River Formation - Laney Member | Mancos Shale, Frontier Ss, and Mowry Shale | Moenkopi and Dinwoody Formations |
| Green River Formation - Wilkins Peak member and Tipton Shale member or Tongue | Park City Formation | Dakota and Cedar Mountain Formation |
| Uinta Mountain Group | Fort Union Formation | Baxter Shale |
| Wasatch Formation - main body | Morrison Formation | Browns Park Formation |
| Alluvium and Colluvium | Nugget (Navajo) Sandstone | Mesaverde Group - Ericson Sandstone |
| Curtis Fm, Entrada Ss, and Carmel Fm | Older alluvial deposits | Weber Sandstone |
| | Mesaverde Group | Flaming Gorge NRA |
| | | Ashley National Forest |

The FGNRA has both energy and mineral resources, including large amounts of renewable hydroelectric power, deeply buried mineral deposits of trona, and potential for small amounts of crude oil, natural gas, and other mineral commodities. People have been using these hydropower resources for many years, but other potential energy and mineral resources within the area are undeveloped.

Locatable minerals (for example, gold and silver) within the FGNRA are not available for mining claims, exploration, or extraction because the FGNRA was formally withdrawn from mining claims and mineral entry when the area was designated. However, the area was known to contain certain leasable minerals, including large amounts of trona, and the potential for crude oil and natural gas. Therefore, when the FGNRA was designated, it was deliberately not closed or withdrawn from future mineral leasing. Although technically open for future mineral leasing, a formal leasing analysis would be needed to determine appropriate areas and stipulations for such leasing, and leases and lease developments would need to be consistent with the purposes for which the FGNRA was created.

Salable minerals are sometimes known as common variety minerals or mineral materials, such as sand, common stone, gravel, clay, and landscaping boulders. The Forest Service has the authority to dispose of salable minerals on National Forest System lands through a variety of methods, including both sales and free-use permits. The development and production of these materials is discretionary for the Forest Service, on a case-by-case basis.

Rangeland Management

The FGNRA has several livestock allotments located within its boundary. The details of each allotment, including status and acres, are presented in table 6. The allotment data represent active, closed, and vacant allotments. Within these allotments are several improvements and structures associated with livestock grazing. Those allotment boundaries are illustrated on figure 5. General Resource Areas (National Forest System lands not within an allotment boundary) are shown in table 7.

Table 6. Grazing Allotments, Status, and Acres within the FGNRA

Allotment	Status	Total Allotment Acres	National Forest Service Acres within FGNRA	Other Acres within FGNRA
Birch Creek-Little Hole	Active	10,411	10,376	35
Cedar Mountain (BLM Admin)	Active	212,698	18,593	251
Goslin Mountain (BLM Admin)	Active	49,703	14,229	--
East Henry's Fork	Closed	135	135	--
Henry's Fork Bottom	Active	61	61	--
Lewis-Allen	Active	13,101	8,000	--
Linwood-South Valley	Active	3,684	3,676	8
Little Davenport	Active	2,327	944	5
Lonesome Park	Active	41,846	11,588	--
Sheep Creek Mountain	Active	22,169	1,426	--
Spring Creek (BLM Admin)	Active	45,472	5,799	--
Sugarloaf (BLM Admin)	Active	79,820	8,397	4
Rock Springs (BLM Admin)	Active	2,061,062	31,498	8,177
Total	--	2,324,918	112,927	8,495

Source: Forest Service GIS 2023

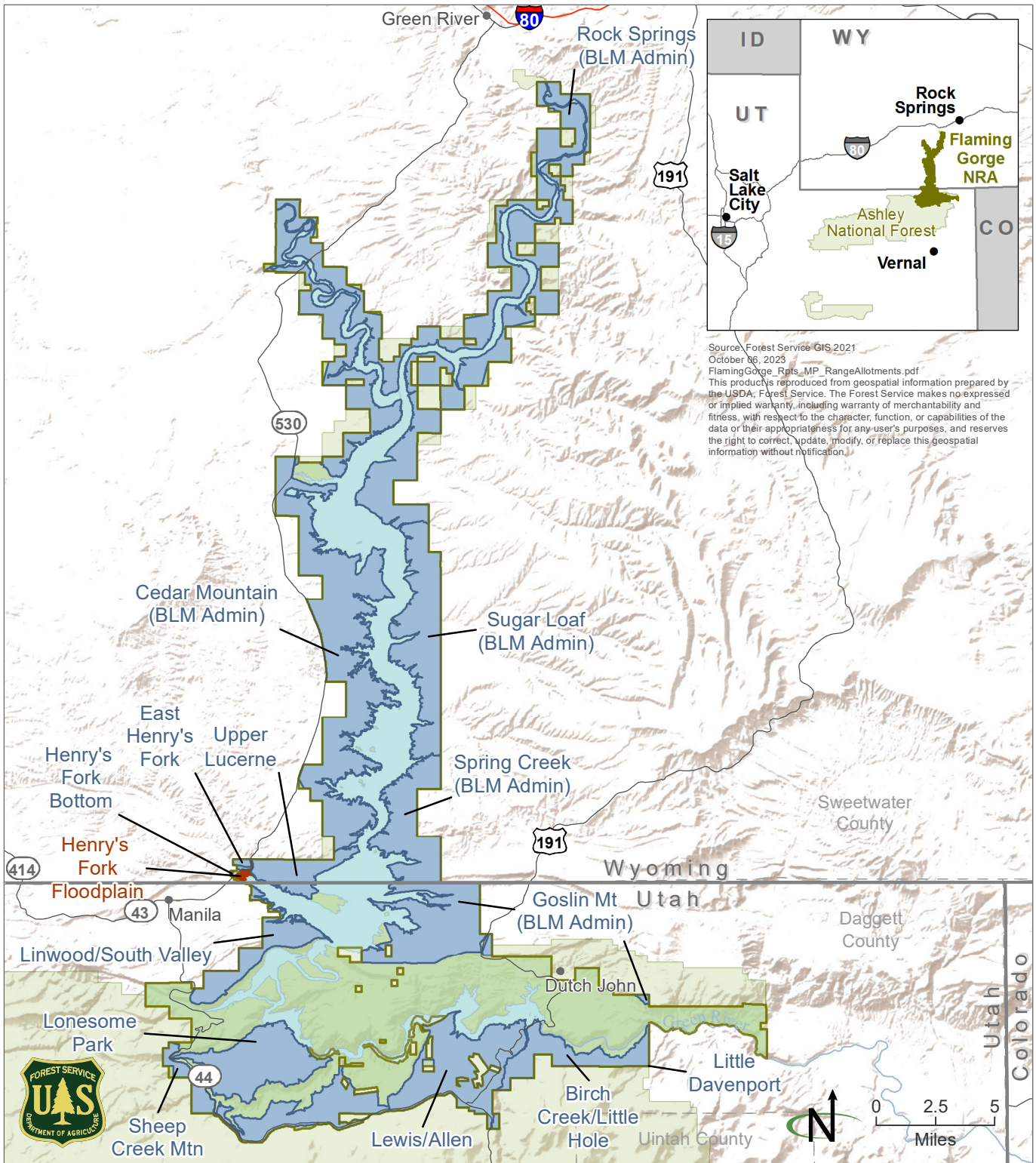


Figure 5, Range Allotments

- Range allotment
- General resource area
- Flaming Gorge NRA
- Ashley National Forest

Table 7. General Resource Area, Status, and Acres

General Resource Area	Status	Total General Resource Area Acres	National Forest Service Acres within FG NRA	Other Acres within FG NRA
Henry's Fork Floodplain	Vacant	210	210	--
Upper Lucerne	Vacant	2,708	2,630	78
Total	--	2,918	2,840	78

Source: Forest Service GIS 2023

Recreation and Facilities

The FG NRA provides a wealth of recreational opportunities and scenic settings for local, regional, and national visitors. The diverse topography, landscapes, water features, vegetation, fish species, wildlife species, and history make the FG NRA a highly popular and widely visited destination.

The National Recreation Area is most known for its scenery, geology, and recreational opportunities, much of which are associated with Flaming Gorge Reservoir. These features and the exceptional quality of the recreational environment provide a vast potential for outdoor recreational activities.

The northern area is arid and primarily treeless with cliffs, steep-sloped buttes, and beaches, depending on the water level in the reservoir. The tall, narrow rock formations and caprock buttes in the Firehole area visually contrast with the sweeping panoramas of sagebrush flats and hills with rock outcrops in the northern and mid part of the area. The southern area has meadows, timber, steep canyons, and mountain peaks. The geological features of Sheep Creek and the visually dramatic Uinta Fault are popular scenic attractions.

The 91-mile-long Flaming Gorge Reservoir has the greatest development supporting water- and road-based recreational opportunities. The shoreline has many large and small coves, inlets, and peninsulas, and small islands are dispersed throughout the reservoir. Visitors come from all over the nation to fish the Blue Ribbon fisheries of the reservoir and the Green River.

The FG NRA also includes the Green River corridor below Flaming Gorge Dam, Red Canyon, Firehole Canyon, Antelope Flat, Sheep Creek Bay, Hideout Canyon, Kingfisher Island, and many other unique areas with opportunities for motorized and nonmotorized recreation.

The steep, colorful cliff walls on both sides of Red Canyon are visible to boaters on Flaming Gorge Reservoir and people viewing the reservoir and canyon from overlooks along the canyon rim and campgrounds along the shore. The scarp and dip ridges that surround and form Sheep Creek Bay, Kingfisher Island, Horseshoe Canyon, and Hideout Canyon create a distinctive visual and recreational experience.

Recreational activities within the FG NRA vary greatly and include the following:

- lake and river fishing
- boating and sailing
- water skiing
- paddleboarding
- scenic viewing
- picnicking
- patronizing visitor and interpretive centers
- traveling scenic byways and backways
- swimming
- river rafting
- camping
- backpacking
- hiking and walking
- hunting
- driving for pleasure
- non-motorized activities
- photography
- mountain biking
- rock climbing
- off-highway vehicle riding
- wildlife and bird watching
- nature center activities
- nature study
- visiting historical sites
- winter sports

Developed Recreation Sites

There are 53 developed recreation sites within the FGNRA. These developed recreation sites include campgrounds, swim beaches, and boat ramps.

There are ten locations from which to launch watercraft on the reservoir, and three of these are full-service marinas. There are nine courtesy docks for short-term docking and three boat-in campgrounds with docks for each site. Eighteen camp docks and seventeen mooring buoys are placed throughout the reservoir to tie watercraft off for overnight camping.

Table 8 presents the information on those developed sites including the name and type of site. Figure 6 shows locations of sites.

Developed Recreation Utilities

Recreation water and sewer development systems

There are eleven water systems on the FGNRA varying from surface water, springs, and wells with no treatment to water treatment plants. Each system is monitored by the state it is in and meets all Environmental Protection Agency and state department of environmental quality requirements for providing potable water.

Sewage needs are met by septic systems at many locations throughout the FGNRA, and at six of the larger complexes there are evaporative lagoons.

Table 9 provides the types of water and sewer developments and their locations on the FGNRA.

Table 8. Developed Recreation Sites

Recreation Site Name	Boat In Campground	Boat Ramp	Campground	Group Campground	Marinas, Resorts Lodging	Day Use, - Fishing, Picnic Site, Other Area	Motorized Play Area	Swim Beach	Interpretive Site/Visitor Center
Antelope Flat		X	X	X					
Anvil Draw		X							
Arch Dam				X					
Big Pine I River Camp	X								
Big Pine II River Camp	X								
Bootleg River Camp	X								
Bootleg Amphitheater									X
Brinegar Ferry Crossing		X							
Buckboard Crossing		X	X		X				
Canyon Rim			X						X
Carmel			X						
Cats Paw River Camp	X								
Cedar Springs		X	X		X				X
Cottonwoods River Camp	X								
Dam Point						X			
Dowd Mountain						X			X
Deep Creek Pullout									X
Deer Run			X						
Dripping Springs			X	X					
Dutch John Draw				X					
Firefighters Memorial			X	X					
Firehole		X	X	X		X		X	
Firehole Overlook									X
Flaming Gorge Dam Visitor Center									X
Flaming Gorge Dam Overlook									X
Greendale Campground			X	X					

Recreation Site Name	Boat In Campground	Boat Ramp	Campground	Group Campground	Marinas, Resorts Lodging	Day Use, - Fishing, Picnic Site, Other Area	Motorized Play Area	Swim Beach	Interpretive Site/Visitor Center
Greendale Overlook									X
Greens Lake			X						
Henry's Fork Wetlands						X			
Hideout	X								
Jarvies Canyon	X			X					
Kingfisher Island	X								
Linwood Bay Overlook									X
Little Hole		X		X		X			
Little Hole Observation Point									X
Lost Dog						X			
Lucerne Valley		X	X	X	X			X	X
Manns Campground			X						
Moose Ponds						X			
Mustang Ridge		X	X	X					X
Navajo Cliffs						X			
Red Canyon					X				X
Sheep Creek Bay		X	X						
Skull Creek			X						
Spillway		X							
Spirit Lake					X				
South Buckboard							X		
Sunny Cove								X	
Stateline Campground			X					X	
Stonefly I River Camp	X								
Stonefly II River Camp	X								
Trails End River Camp	X								
Upper Marsh Creek		X							
West Greens Lake						X			
Willows			X						

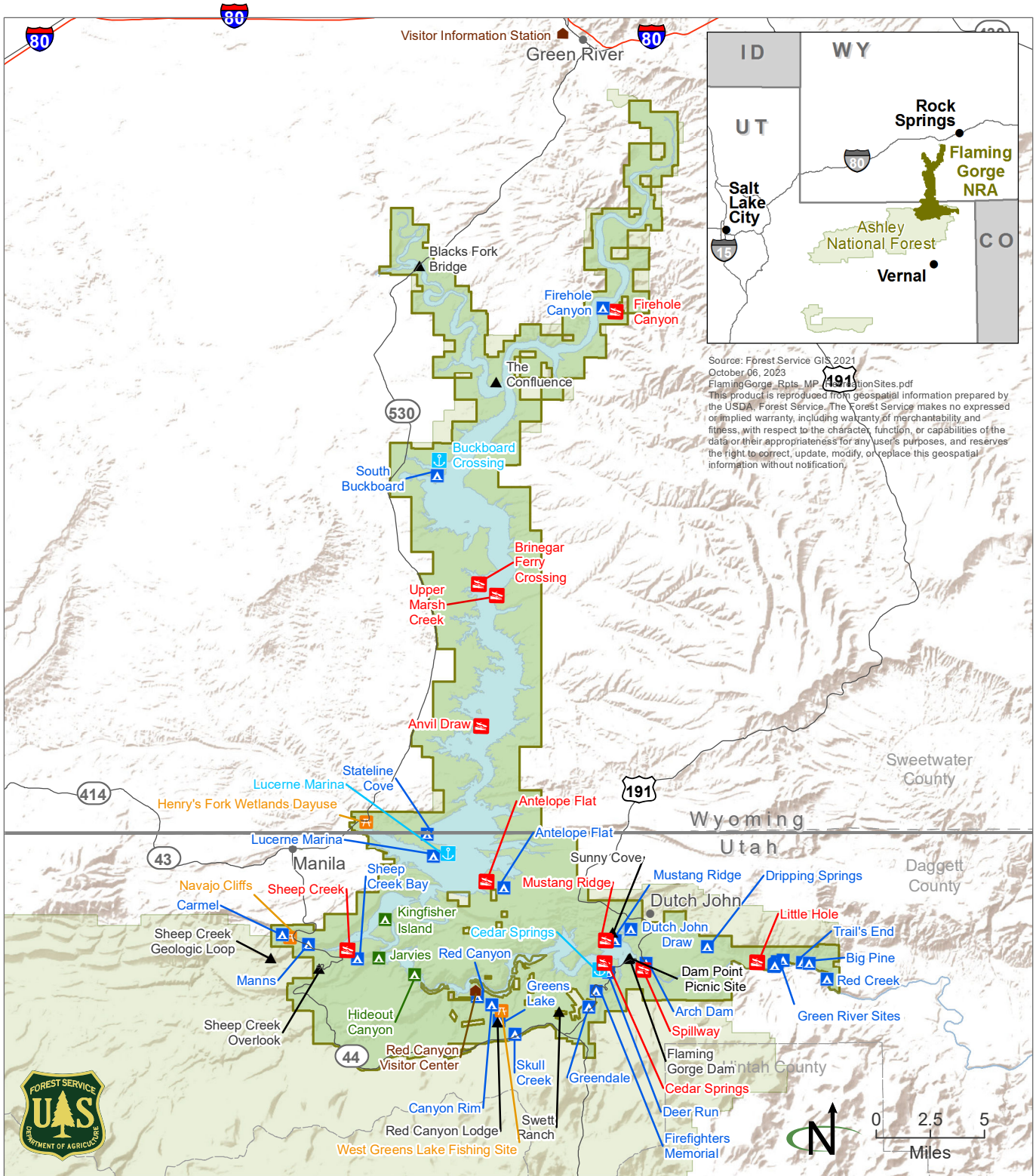


Figure 6, Recreation Sites

- | | | | |
|--|----------------|--|------------------------|
| | Campground | | Boat in campground |
| | Boat launch | | Other |
| | Marina | | Flaming Gorge NRA |
| | Visitor center | | Ashley National Forest |
| | Day use area | | |

Table 9. Water and Sewer Developments on the FG NRA

Development	Well	Spring	Surface Water	Chlorinated	Treatment	Septic	Lagoon
Antelope	X						
Arch Dam/Spillway			X	X	X		
Buckboard Crossing			X		X		X
Dripping Springs			X	X	X		
Firehole Canyon	X						X
Greendale		X		X	X	X	X
Hideout Canyon		X		X		X	
Little Hole		X		X		X	
Lucerne	X						X
Mustang			X	X	X	X	
Ross Spring		X		X	X	X	

Visitor Education and Interpretation

The FG NRA offers opportunities for connecting people to their environment and to the natural and cultural history of the area. These connections provide opportunities for the development of strong stewardship ethics in the form of personally delivered talks and programs, brochures and booklets, and interpretive wayside exhibits using digital and other formats.

Table 10 below presents the information on developed interpretive sites on the FG NRA including the name and type of site.

Table 10. Interpretive and Educational Site Locations on the FG NRA

Education and Interpretation Site Name	Site Type
Antelope Flat	Scenic Byway Interpretive Site
Bootleg	Amphitheater
Canyon Rim Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Cedar Springs Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Byway Interpretive Site
Dowd Mountain Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Firehole	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Flaming Gorge Dam	Visitor Center (BOR managed)
Flaming Gorge Dam Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site (BOR managed)
Greendale	Interpretive Site
Greendale Junction	Scenic Byway Interpretive Site
Greendale Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Byway Interpretive Site
Henry's Fork Wetlands	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Trail
Linwood Bay Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Little Hole Observation Point	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Site
Lucerne Valley	Amphitheater
Mustang Ridge	Amphitheater
Red Canyon	Visitor Center
Red Canyon Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Interpretive Trail
Sheep Creek Bay Overlook	Scenic Overlook and Byway Interpretive Site
Sheep Creek Nature Trail	Scenic Byway Interpretive Trail
Swett Ranch	Historical Site
West Greens Lake	Scenic Byway Interpretive Trail

Recreation Special Uses and Permits

The FGNRA provides opportunities for a variety of recreation special uses. The agency's special-uses program authorizes uses on National Forest Service land to provide a benefit to the public while protecting natural resources values. Special use permits authorize services that help the district support the Forest Service mission and meet the needs of recreational users. These permits become a partnership between the Forest Service and the private businesses that provide an array of programs, services, and facilities.

Recreation special uses permitted on the Flaming Gorge Ranger District include:

- Privately operated marinas
- Privately operated resorts
- Campground concessions
- Green River outfitters and guides
- Flaming Gorge Reservoir outfitters and guides
- High country horseback, fishing, and hunting outfitters and guides
- Recreational events
- Noncommercial group uses
- Vendor shuttle services
- Vendor food services
- Livestock areas with cultivation
- Commercial filming and photography

Recreation Use Fees

In December 2004, Congress enacted the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), which gave certain Federal land management agencies a long-term, multi-agency recreation fee program. Recreation fees provide crucial resources that allow Federal agencies to respond to increased demands on Federal lands. The goal is to provide visitors with a quality recreation experience through enhanced facilities and services.

The REA prohibits collection of entry fees for National Forest System lands. However, it authorizes the collection of fees at areas that provide certain amenities. Standard fees may be charged at national conservation areas, national volcanic monuments, visitor centers, and all recreation sites or areas that provide at least these amenities: picnic tables, trash collection, toilets, parking, interpretive signage, and security services.

Fee revenue's distribution is dependent on the fee collection method. At least 95% of the fees collected in a national forest or unit must remain there. Most of these funds are used for recreation or permit site repair, maintenance, enhancement, visitor services, habitat restoration, law enforcement, and fee management agreements. A small percentage can be used for direct operation expenses. Another small percentage can be used for administrative, overhead, and indirect costs. The other 5% of the fees collected on a national forest or unit may be used by the region for deferred maintenance projects and some other recreational expenditures.

Dispersed Recreation

Dispersed recreation is any recreational activity outside of a developed recreation site and includes travel on trails, roads, and water. Dispersed recreational activities include camping outside a developed campground, known as dispersed camping, backpacking, off-highway vehicle use, driving for pleasure on roads and trails, fishing and boating, mountain biking, trail running, and horseback riding.

The FGNRA offers numerous locations and a diverse range of settings for dispersed recreational opportunities. Some of the popular locations and activities include:

- water-based recreation, which includes boating for pleasure, water skiing, rafting, sailing, kayaking, paddle boarding, and fishing on Flaming Gorge Reservoir and the Green River;
- dispersed camping and off-highway vehicle riding on roads and trails along the shoreline and areas adjacent to Flaming Gorge Reservoir;
- hiking, fishing, dispersed camping, and hunting in areas along the Highway 191 and Highway 44 corridors and other forest roads;
- off-highway vehicle uses in the designated open play area to the southeast of South Buckboard;
- and winter recreational activities such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing along the rim of Red Canyon or ice-fishing on Flaming Gorge Reservoir or the Green and Blacks Fork Rivers at the north end of the reservoir.

Dispersed recreation occurs within the FGNRA in undeveloped areas. The level of dispersed use depends on the visitor experience desired, setting, ease of access, and nearby facilities. The shoreline surrounding Flaming Gorge Reservoir has high dispersed camping use by visitors who desire water-based activities. These visitors often use both RVs and boats in areas such as Stateline Cove and South Buckboard. The confluence of the Green and Blacks Fork Rivers, Lost Dog, and Jug Hollow are also popular and concentrated dispersed recreation sites.

Many dispersed recreation visitors come from the Wasatch Front and other regional locations. However, residents of northeastern Utah and southern Wyoming have a long tradition of using many of the dispersed recreation areas for annual gatherings of families and friends.

The Green River corridor below Flaming Gorge Dam receives very high fishing and rafting dispersed recreation. Visitors come from across the nation to fish the Blue Ribbon trout fishery. Flaming Gorge Reservoir also has a very high level of dispersed recreation on the reservoir itself and the adjacent shoreline.

In certain locations, the amount of dispersed recreation use can be significant. To address this use, some development at dispersed locations may occur, such as installing restrooms at high use areas, hardening sites to reduce erosion, and installing barriers to discourage dispersed use in sensitive areas.

Motorized dispersed camping is allowed only within 150 feet of designated roads and trails in Utah and 300 feet in Wyoming and is limited to designated sections that are shown on the Motorized Vehicle Use Map where significant impact to other resources is not likely to occur. There are over 251 miles of roads and trails within the FGNRA available for motorized dispersed camping use.

Travel and Recreation Access

Roads and trails within the FGNRA provide opportunities for dispersed recreational travel activities such as scenic driving, off-highway vehicle traveling, horseback riding, mountain biking, cross-country skiing,

and hiking. They also provide access to developed sites and areas for other dispersed recreational activities.

Motorized Routes

There are abundant opportunities for motorized recreation throughout the FGNRA. These routes provide recreational access for other activities as well as recreational traveling. Motorized travel within the FGNRA is administered through the 2009 Ashley National Forest Travel Management Plan. Motorized travel is restricted to designated routes that include paved roads, gravel or dirt roads, and trails designated for motor vehicle use.

The NRA currently has five designated road classifications and approximately 294 miles of open roads for motorized use as outlined in the Travel Plan. There are also several motorized trails allowing for additional access with a combined total of approximately 5.47 miles. These are presented in table 11 and figure 7.

Table 11. Types and Amounts of Motorized Routes within FGNRA

Designated Road Classes	Miles
Class 1 – Basic Custodial Care (Closed except for administrative use)	10.04
Class 2 – High Clearance Vehicles	186.61
Class 3 – Suitable for Passenger Cars	35.27
Class 4 – Moderate Degree of User Comfort	23.1
Class 5 – High Degree of User Comfort	39.28

Motorized Trail Classes	Miles
Trails Open to All Vehicles, Yearlong	2.76
Trails Open to Vehicles 50 inch or Less in Width, Yearlong	2.68
Total	5.44

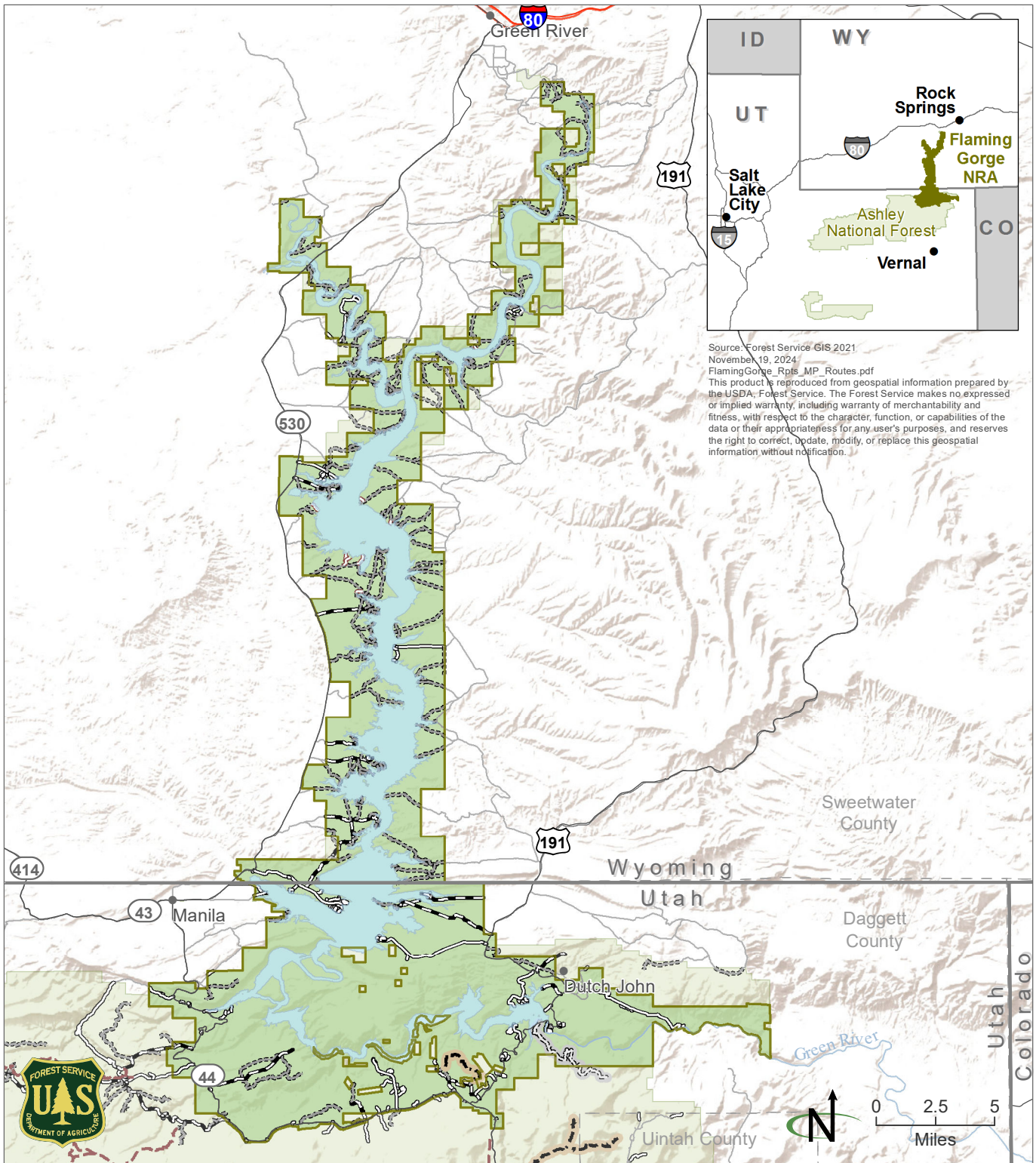
Source: Forest Service GIS 2023

Nonmotorized Routes

Nonmotorized trails within the FGNRA are an important recreation resource. These trails provide access to areas where motorized travel is either prohibited or discouraged. They offer abundant recreational opportunities including hiking, horseback riding, fishing, mountain biking, climbing, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and many others. There are approximately 36 miles of nonmotorized trails within the FGNRA.

Popular trails within the FGNRA including the following:

- Little Hole National Recreation Trail
- Red Canyon Rim Trail
- Bear Canyon Trail
- Hideout-Carter Creek



Source: Forest Service GIS 2021
 November 19, 2024
 FlamingGorge_Rpts_MP_Routes.pdf
 This product is reproduced from geospatial information prepared by the USDA, Forest Service. The Forest Service makes no expressed or implied warranty, including warranty of merchantability and fitness, with respect to the character, function, or capabilities of the data or their appropriateness for any user's purposes, and reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace this geospatial information without notification.

Figure 7, Motorized Routes

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------|
| Road open to all vehicles, yearlong | Other public road | Ashley National Forest |
| Road open to highway legal vehicles only, yearlong | Trail open to all vehicles, yearlong | |
| Special designation road, yearlong | Trail open to vehicles 50" or less in width, yearlong | |
| Special designation road, seasonal | Trail open to vehicles 50" or less in width, seasonal | |
| Interstate | Flaming Gorge NRA | |
| State or US highway | | |

Scenic Byways/Backways

Scenic byways are federally designated roads that feature one or more archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, or scenic qualities. Scenic backways are state-designated routes that are less-developed, rugged routes, often on National Forest System roads.

The FGNRA has multiple Scenic Byways and Backways that include:

- Flaming Gorge Scenic Byway All American Road
- Flaming Gorge – Uintas National Scenic Byway
- Sheep Creek / Spirit Lake Loop Utah Scenic Backway (entrance sections)

These scenic byways and backway provide a unique recreational opportunity to view the high scenic quality and natural-appearing scenery of the area. The routes take visitors through sand and limestone formations, rich in fossils, and through a variety of vegetation types (such as sagebrush flats, pinyon-juniper forests, mountain meadows, and forests of aspen, ponderosa pine, and lodgepole pine) with views of the High Uinta Mountains. While traveling the byways and backway may be a recreational activity itself, the routes also provide important access to numerous other developed and dispersed recreation sites.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

In 2005 and 2008, respectively, the Ashley National Forest conducted a Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility and Suitability Study. During this study on the FGNA, it was determined that the only river suitable for this designation is 13 miles of the Green River below Flaming Gorge Dam, which meets the scenic classification.

Inventoried Roadless Areas

The 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule) established prohibitions and exceptions on road construction, road reconstruction, and timber harvesting on 58.5 million acres of National Forest System lands across the United States. This includes approximately 119,511 acres of inventoried roadless areas on the FGNRA.

The intent of the Roadless Rule is to provide lasting protection for inventoried roadless areas within the National Forest System in the context of multiple-use management. Specifically, the Roadless Rule prohibits activities that have the greatest likelihood of altering and fragmenting landscapes.

Table 12 identifies each inventoried roadless area and the number of acres of inventoried roadless areas within the FGNRA. Figure 8 displays roadless areas in the FGNRA.

Table 12. Acres of Inventoried Roadless Areas in the FGNRA

Inventoried Roadless Area	Acres
401001	11,705
401002	36,113
401018	6,157
401019	6,202
401021	5,152
401023	8,352
401024	12,882
401025	1,471

Inventoried Roadless Area	Acres
401026	398
401028	446
401030	531
401031	6,470
401032	6,471
401035	5,465
401036	6,309
401037	1,166
419020	4,220
Total Acres	119,511

Source: Forest Service GIS 2023

Scenery

The FGNRA provides a wide range of outstanding scenery for forest visitors. The designating legislation notes conservation of the scenic attributes of the FGNRA as being one of the purposes of its designation. The spectacular scenery of the FGNRA is a national and regional driver for tourism, recreation, the economy, and local community growth.

Scenic Character

Scenic character within the FGNRA varies greatly, as detailed in the following descriptions of subareas within the Flaming Gorge Ranger District.

Flaming Gorge Ranger District North Subarea

The Flaming Gorge Ranger District North Subarea features a high desert landscape. The majestic red cliffs and steep-sloped buttes juxtaposing the long flat beaches of the Flaming Gorge Reservoir have inspired countless visitors, including explorer John Wesley Powell who gave the Reservoir its name. The sense of place for the subarea is very distinct. The Firehole area, in the northeast part of the subarea, is uniquely defined by chimneys, which are tall narrow rock formations, and caprock buttes. Sweeping panoramas of sagebrush flats and hills with brown/gray rock outcroppings dominate the northern and mid portions of the area with the Uinta Mountains and scarp ridges provide a scenic backdrop to the south. The Firehole and Buckboard recreation complexes provide relaxing places to camp, fish, and explore the surrounding areas on trails that wind through nearby meadows and tree-covered slopes.

The shoreline of Flaming Gorge Reservoir has many large and small coves, inlets, and peninsulas. Buckboard peninsula, which lies just south of the Buckboard complex, has a long, flat shoreline providing easy access to the reservoir and popular dispersed camping areas. The broad, gentle shoreline of Stateline Cove at the far southern border of the subarea is also a popular Reservoir-adjacent camping area. Russian olive and sage brush provide minimal shade near the shore, but the lack of tall vegetation allows for incredible scenic views of the clear blue Reservoir and surrounding bluffs and mountain peaks.

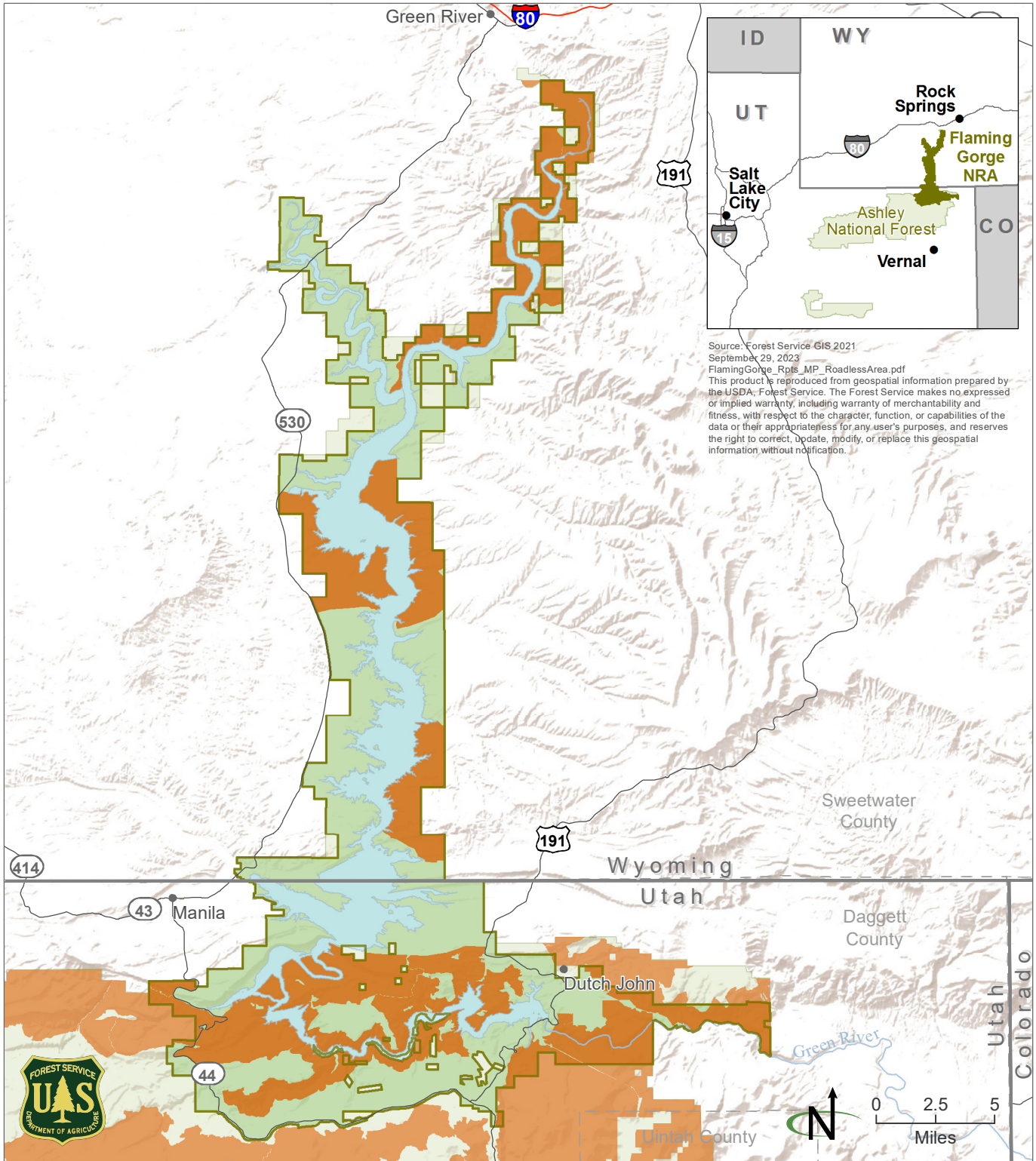


Figure 8, Roadless Areas

- Inventoried roadless area
- Flaming Gorge NRA
- Ashley National Forest

There are a number of small islands dispersed throughout the Reservoir. At the head of the coves and inlets are seasonally flowing stream drainages with low-growing brush and vegetation. Most of the area contrasts sharply with the adjacent National Forest System lands to the south, being considerably more arid than the nearby Uinta Mountains. Even though the area is primarily treeless, there are a few forests of evergreens, pinyon pines, and junipers along the Green River floodplain and the gentler slopes surrounding the Reservoir. The yellow fall foliage contrasts beautifully with the gray limestone and red sandstone cliffs. The brown slopes dotted with green, low-growing vegetation leading down to the Reservoir are highly dissected by seasonally flowing stream channels and gullies, with few perennial streams. The shale component of the landscape transmits water slowly, if at all; thus, the land tends to become waterlogged and, in some areas, alkaline flats develop. Shale has a plastic texture when wet and tends to erode rapidly, which has resulted in dissected and eroded slopes and landforms.

Due to the geology, consisting of shale, organic mudstone and marlstone, sandstone, limestone, and oil shale, much of the area's prehistoric record has been preserved as numerous types of fossils. Rock art and other remnants of ancient human settlements can still be found on the landscape. However, many of the prehistoric and historic sites were submerged in the waters of Flaming Gorge Reservoir with the construction of the Flaming Gorge Dam.

The Flaming Gorge/Green River Scenic Byway, which is located on both the east and west sides of the subarea, allows visitors to enjoy the area's beauty from their vehicle. The scenic byway is the main access route to the subarea. Bands of wild horses, along with mule deer, pronghorn, elk, moose, foxes, and coyotes have adapted well to the desert landscape of sagebrush, saltbrush, and grasses. Patient visitors are sure to spot some of the animals that made this area their home.

Flaming Gorge Ranger District South Subarea

From prehistoric civilizations to explorers like General William Ashley and John Wesley Powell, to homesteaders in the 1900s and Flaming Gorge Dam construction workers, the south subarea of the Flaming Gorge Ranger District has a rich history of occupation. The historic Swett Ranch, built during the homesteading era, is now a Forest Service interpretive site and offers trails through open meadows of yellow wildflowers and scenic views of Lake Flaming Gorge and Baretop Mountain. Dutch John is another place of historical significance on the district. This town was built to house workers constructing the Flaming Gorge Dam. The Forest Service still owns some of the buildings in this historic town but is working to reduce its building inventory by sale or conveyance.

The Flaming Gorge-Uintas National Scenic Byway affords outstanding views of the National Recreation Area and multiple developed overlooks and interpretive areas. Byway travelers can view varied terrain, landforms, aspects, and precipitation throughout the Flaming Gorge Ranger District South Subarea, which has resulted in vegetation communities ranging from sagebrush flats to dense conifer forests, alpine forbs, and grasses. The Sheep Creek-Spirit Lake Scenic Backway passes through the Sheep Creek Geological Area. The Backway travels through dense pine forests, aspen stands, and large open meadows strewn with colorful flowers. Interesting rock features were created by the earth's plates shifting and moving during the Uinta Mountain uplift. The Ute Tower Fire Lookout and Spirit Lake are also popular attractions on the Backway and some of the best places in which to spot moose in Flaming Gorge Country. The forests of ponderosa pines form a mostly continuous belt from Ute Lookout Tower to the eastern end of the Ashley National Forest. These ponderosa pine parks contain tall, large-crowned, widely spaced trees with grasses and low-growing shrubs blanketing the ground beneath them.

A combination of shales, limestones, sandstones, and quartzite form the geology of the area. The faults and folds of the Uinta Mountain uplift and the Uinta Mountain Group beds weather differently. This

results in ridges with steep southern faces and more gently sloping northern slopes with intervening valleys in the northern part of the subarea, such as Sheep Creek Bay. The Green River’s erosion of the Uinta Mountain quartzite has resulted in the steep, high, red-colored canyon walls rising from the Reservoir and the Green River below the Flaming Gorge Dam. On the plateaus south and west of Flaming Gorge Reservoir, rock outcrops and large boulders are common places to find nesting raptors. Stream drainages dissecting the plateaus have a low to moderate gradient, creating various wet and dry meadows throughout the area. Mule deer and bighorn sheep can be found traveling through the gently rolling upland of the subarea’s southern border and among the broken rock fields scattered throughout the slopes. In the far southwestern corner of the subarea, between Leidy Peak and Tamarack Lake, glaciation has formed cirques, basins, lakes, ground moraines, exposed bedrock, and deep gorges. The summits and slopes of these glaciated mountains are gently rolling, rounded bolliies. A bollie is a local term for a treeless alpine ridge top with grasses and forbs.

There are many scenic canyons throughout the subarea, such as Horseshoe Canyon, Jarvies Canyon, Hideout Canyon, and Red Canyon. The steep, red cliff walls of these canyons contrast with the deep blue water of the Reservoir and intense green vegetation, creating a unique experience for visitors boating on Flaming Gorge Reservoir and those viewing the Reservoir and canyon from overlooks along the canyon rim.

Scenic Integrity Objectives

Conservation and management of scenic resources is outlined in the 2024 Ashley National Forest revised forest plan. Scenery management within the FGNRA is guided by assigned scenic integrity objectives within the forest plan that were developed according to the Forest Service Scenery Management System process, which specifies four levels from “very high” to “low.” These scenic integrity objectives are used for project planning, analysis, implementation, and monitoring work.

Table 13 identifies the assigned acres and percentages of the FGNRA scenic integrity objectives. These are visually shown in figure 9, which includes scenic integrity locations.

Table 13. Acres of Each Scenic Integrity Objective for the FGNRA

Scenic Integrity Objective Level	Acres
Very High	0
High	160,536
Moderate	27,870
Low	0

Source: Forest Service GIS 2023

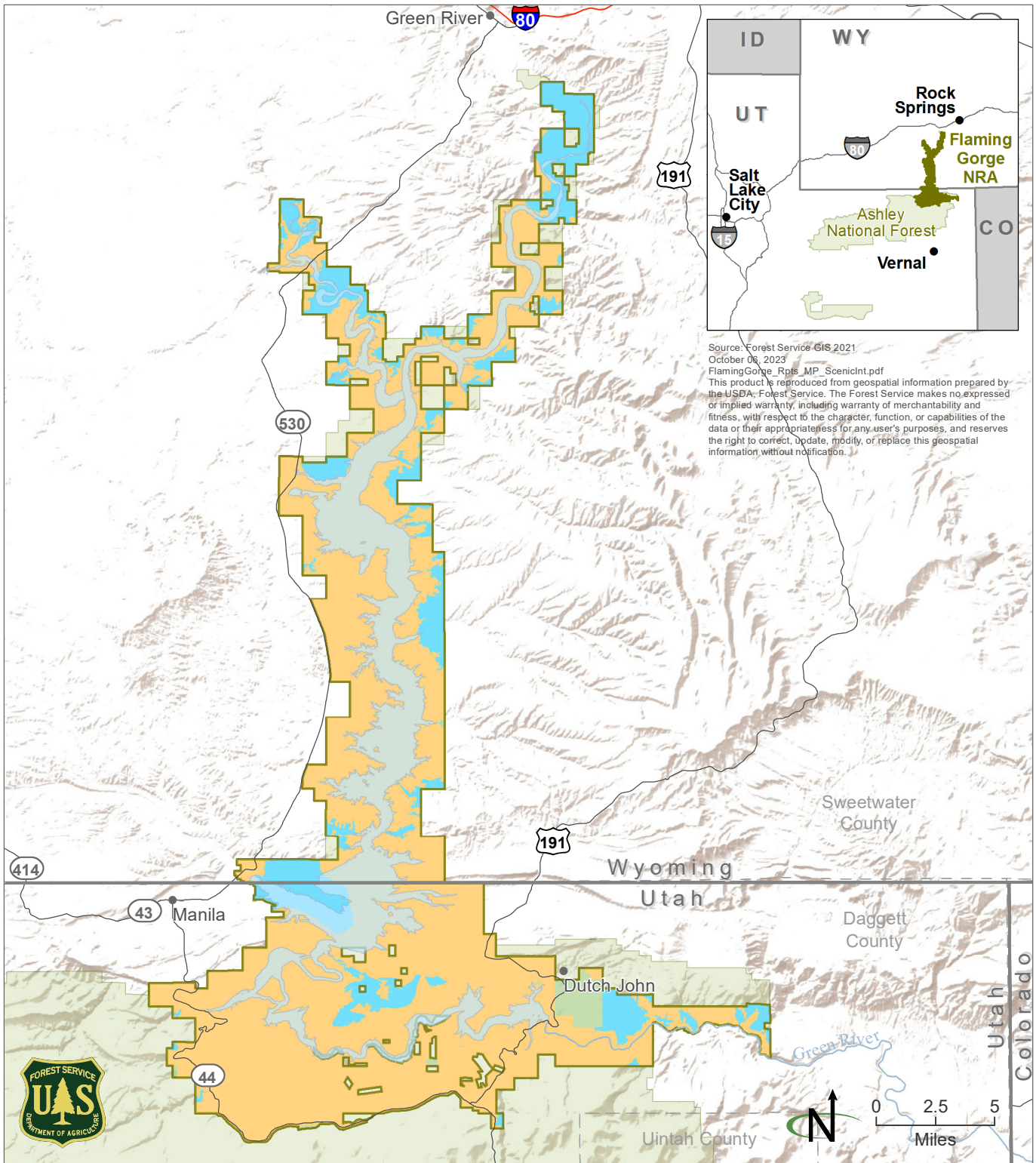


Figure 9, Scenic Integrity Objectives

- High
- Ashley National Forest
- Moderate
- Flaming Gorge NRA

Special Land Uses

Land use refers to current uses of land. It can be residential, commercial, industrial, or agricultural use for private lands, and current land allocations and the uses permitted in existing land management plans for Ashley National Forest System or other public lands. Desired land uses under local government authorities may provide important information about how future changes in land use may affect management of the national forest plan area.

The FGNRA consists of 207,363 acres of National Forest System-administered lands. Within the administrative boundary of the FGNRA are 10,695 acres of private land and 1,367 acres of state trust lands, as shown in table 14.

Table 14. Acres of land classified by ownership within the FGNRA

Area	National Forest System (acres)	Private (acres)	State (acres)
FGNRA	207,363	10,695	1,367

The FGNRA contains multiple lands special use permits and ROWs, shown in table 15 below. These special use permits allow for roads, electric transmission and distribution, natural gas pipelines, canals, telephone lines, and other use types.

Table 15. Types of lands special use authorizations on the FGNRA

Lands Special Uses	Special Use Permits
Agricultural and agricultural improvements	2
Research	2
Cultural resource	0
Storage	1
Natural Gas Pipelines	9
Energy generation and transmission (FERC)	0
Electric transmission and distribution	17
Federal aid highway right-of-way	8
Road or trail authorization	7
Communications, communication use	12
Other communication uses (Snotel/Seismic)	1
Telephone	4
Canals	2
Canals under ditch bill easements	8
Dams, reservoirs	6
Dams, reservoirs under ditch bill easement	N/A
Water developments and measure (gauging station)	1
Total lands special uses authorizations	80

The term, “withdrawal,” as described in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, means withholding an area of Federal land from settlement, sale, location, or entry under some or all of the general land laws. This would be for the purpose of limiting activities under those laws to maintain other public values in the area or reserving the area for a particular public purpose or program; or transferring jurisdiction over an area of Federal land, other than “property” governed by the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 472) from one department, bureau, or agency to another department, bureau, or agency. The FGNRA contains three major withdrawals: a mineral withdrawal, BOR Colorado River Storage project withdrawal, and a power site classification withdrawal on the Green River below Flaming Gorge Dam.

Vegetation (Forest and Non-Forest)

The FGNRA has a variety of vegetation types. These range from nonforested vegetation to forested vegetation. The general vegetation types and their approximate acres are presented in table 16 below.

Table 16. Vegetation Types Within the FGNRA

Vegetation Type	Acres
Coniferous Forest	25,952
Deciduous Forest	76
Desert Shrub	68,307
Grassland	202
Mountain Brush	4,776
Riparian	3,572
Seral Deciduous Forest	236
Shrubland	20,593
Water	41,336
Woodland	35,628
Total	200,678

Source: Forest Service GIS 2023

The FGNRA has a variety of nonforested plant groups found in different settings. These groups include desert shrub, aspen, grasslands, mountain brush, nonvegetation, riparian, shrublands, and coniferous woodlands. Table 17 summarizes some of the typical vegetation types in the FGNRA, where they are commonly found, and their approximate spatial extent. Figure 10 shows vegetation and ecosystems.

Table 17. Nonforested Vegetation Groups, Locations, and Acres Within the FGNRA

Vegetation Group/Type	Setting/Location	Acres
Desert shrub	Located in cold desert environments with warm summers and freezing winters. Annual precipitation ranges between 6 and 12 inches. Communities typically consist of one to two shrub components with minimal herbaceous vegetation.	68,307
- Mixed desert shrub	Salt desert communities of the Green River Basin where two or more shrubs dominate vegetation cover.	
- Wyoming big sagebrush	Landscape dominant where annual precipitation ranges between 8 and 10 inches. Often associated with aridisol soils.	
- Spiny hopsage	Eolian sands and gravelly slopewash colluvium of the Green River Formation within salt desert environments.	

Vegetation Group/Type	Setting/Location	Acres
- Gardner saltbush	Heavy clays or fine-textured soils derived from the Bridger or Hilliard Shale Formations of the Green River Basin.	
- Shadscale	Indicator of salt desert shrub communities where soils are fine textured and alkaline. Often grows as a codominant with other desert shrubs.	
- Winterfat	Deep silty soils of salt desert environments, where annual precipitation is ≤ 10 inches.	
Aspen woodland	Montane woodland communities consisting of persistent or seral aspen community types.	312
Grassland	Areas dominated by graminoid species in semi-arid environments, typically western wheatgrass.	202
Mountain brush	Shrub-dominated communities that occur at mid elevations, often associated with pinyon-juniper woodlands. Shrublands are typically dominated by species of mountain mahogany but associated with other shrubs.	4,776
- Mountain mahogany	Mountain brush communities where the dominant shrub is usually alder-leaf mountain mahogany but occasionally curl-leaf or dwarf mountain mahogany.	
Nonvegetation	Areas devoid of vegetative cover.	41,336
- Water	Surface water such as lakes, streams, and ponds.	
Riparian	Areas with high water tables supporting wetland obligate plant species located along stream corridors, around lakes, or in bottoms of basins or drainages.	3,572
- Riparian herbaceous	Wetlands and riparian areas lacking or with minimal woody plants.	
- Riparian woody	Wetlands and riparian areas with a shrub and/or tree component.	
Shrubland	Lower to upper montane slopes and benches, usually below the conifer zone and intermixed or above the pinyon-juniper zone.	20,593
- Black sagebrush	South exposures on gentle slopes below 8,000 feet. Intermixed with and above the pinyon-juniper zone.	
- Mountain big sagebrush	Upper montane slopes, benches, and foothills intermixed with persistent aspen and lower coniferous forest, and above the pinyon-juniper zone.	
- Wyoming big sagebrush	Lower montane slopes and toe of mountain below 7,000 feet elevation; below pinyon-juniper zone.	
- Basin big sagebrush	Moderate to steep glaciated canyon slopes on south facing slopes between 8,000 to 9,000 feet in elevation.	
- Greasewood	Found in desert shrub, fluvial, and flood plains where soils are highly saline, but soil textures vary from sandy to heavy clay.	
Coniferous woodland	Lower to mid-montane slopes.	35,628
- Pinyon-Juniper	Lower to mid-montane slopes between 6,700 and 8,000 feet, below mountain big sagebrush/persistent aspen zone.	
Total		174,726

Source: Forest Service GIS 2023

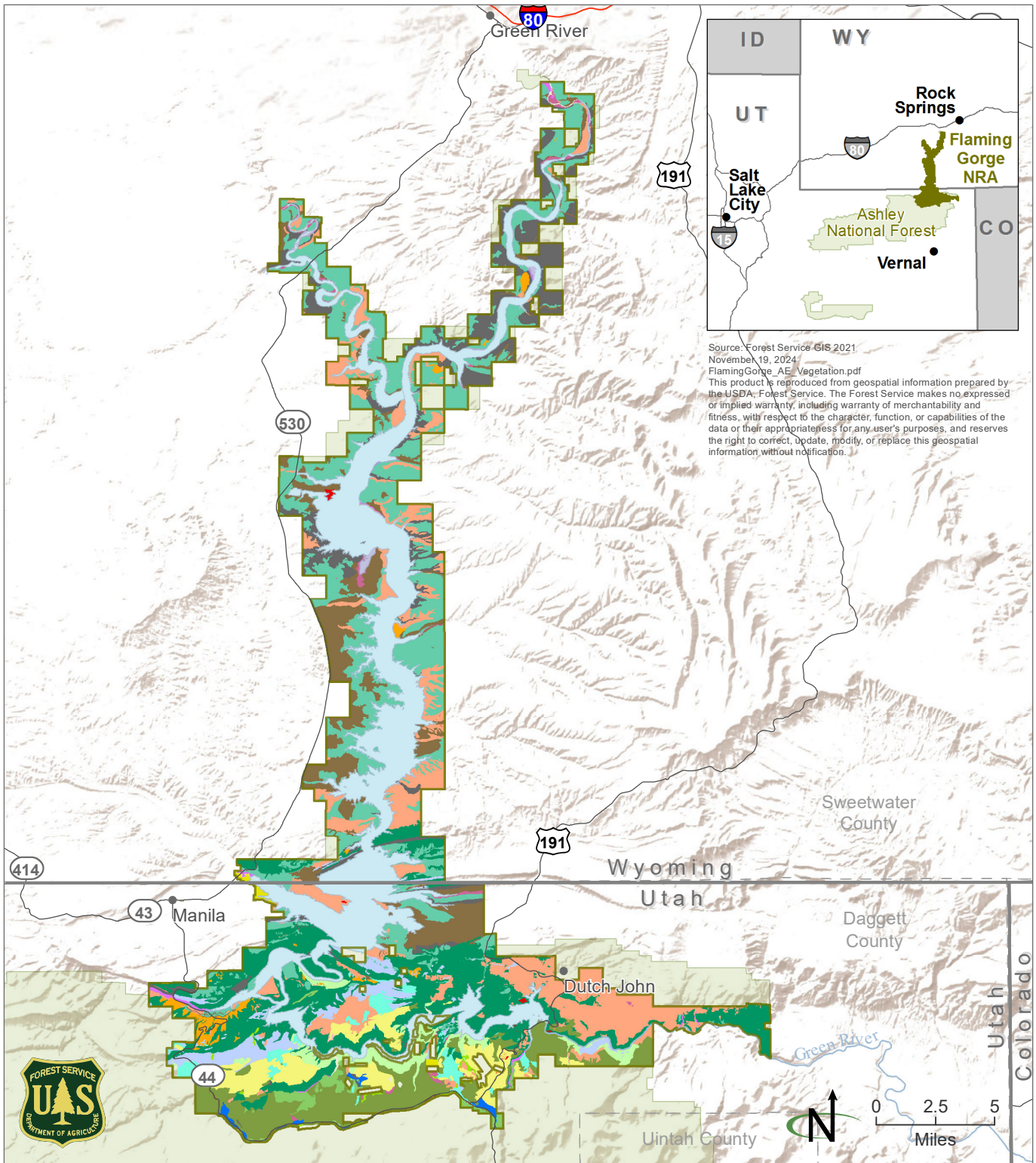


Figure 10, Vegetation Types and Ecosystems

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Agriculture | Pinyon-juniper | Upland herbaceous | Ponderosa pine mix |
| Developed | Mixed conifer | Mountain big sagebrush | Lodgepole pine |
| Desert shrub | Aspen-conifer mix | Wyoming big sagebrush | Mountain mahogany |
| Mixed desert shrub | Riparian woody | Douglas fir | Exposed rock |
| Mountain shrubland | Riparian herbaceous | Ponderosa pine | Flaming Gorge NRA |
| | | | Ashley National Forest |

Various plant species within the FGRNA have special status under Forest Service or state designation. Details are provided in table 18.

Within the forested vegetation, there are about 13,117 acres that are considered suitable for timber production or about 7 percent of the FGNRA. Areas suitable for timber production are areas where growing, tending, harvesting, and regeneration of regulated crops of trees to be cut into logs, bolts, or other round sections for industrial or consumer use occur. Areas suitable for timber harvest are shown in figure 11.

Table 18. Information for Special Status Plant Species within the FGNRA

Scientific Name/ Common Name	Rationale	Forest Service Status	State Status	Habitat/ Land Type Association (LTA) ²	Stressors/ Drivers	Observation Information
<i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i> Ute ladies'-tresses	Endemic Listed as threatened	Threatened	-	Floodplains, streams, and other riparian habitats Red Canyon LTA	Stressors include urbanization and stream channelization for agriculture and development. Habitat loss or alteration from nonnative plant competition and vegetation succession appear to be the most widespread threats.	There are four occurrences within the plan area along the Green River between Little Hole and the Forest Boundary. They are known from below the National Forest boundary along the Green, Yellowstone, Uinta, Lake Fork, and Rock Creek Rivers. Most occurrences are small, having less than 1,000 plants and occupying less than 50 acres.

² LTA information depicts subregional, and landscape ecological units developed according to the classification schema of the National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units.

Scientific Name/ Common Name	Rationale	Forest Service Status	State Status	Habitat/ Land Type Association (LTA)²	Stressors/ Drivers	Observation Information
<i>Penstemon acaulis</i> Stemless beardtongue	Local endemic Listed as sensitive	Species of Conservation Concern	Peripheral Species of Concern	G2 Utah S1 Wyoming S1	Mixed desert shrub, black sagebrush, Wyoming big sagebrush, and pinyon-juniper communities North Flank LTA Antelope Flat LTA	In Utah, stressors include recreation, off-road vehicles, and livestock trampling. In Wyoming, stressors also include gravel quarrying and road construction. Climate change may be a stressor if high evapotranspiration rate and low rainfalls occur.
<i>Cirsium ownbeyi</i> Ownbey's thistle	Regional endemic Two occurrences documented within plan area	Species of Conservation Concern	Watch, Species of Concern	G3 Utah S1 Wyoming S2 Colorado S2	Sagebrush, desert shrub communities Green River LTA	Species is adapted to natural disturbances and known to colonize roadsides, which indicates tolerance of or benefits from disturbance. They may be vulnerable to herbicides, biocontrol insects, or disturbance from recreation vehicles.

Scientific Name/ Common Name	Rationale	Forest Service Status	State Status	Habitat/ Land Type Association (LTA) ²	Stressors/ Drivers	Observation Information
<i>Cypripedium fasciculatum</i> Clustered Lady's Slipper	Known populations consist of few plants. Timber harvest, bark beetle infestations, and fire are stressors. Listed as sensitive in Utah.	Species of Conservation Concern	Rare, Species of Potential Concern	Shade of coniferous forests between 8,000 to 9,000 feet in duff of moderately dense to dense lodgepole pine forests where understory species are sparse. Parks Plateau LTA Trout Slope LTA	Timber harvest, bark beetle infestations, and fire are stressors.	There are about 30 known occurrences in the plan area. Most populations consist of a few plants (1 to 100).
<i>Oxytropis besseyi</i> var. <i>obnapiformis</i> Maybell Locoweed	Regional endemic One occurrence documented in the plan area	Species of Conservation Concern	Watch, Species of Concern	G5/T2 Utah S2 Wyoming S1 Colorado S2	Pinyon-juniper and sagebrush communities, often on semi-barrens in either fine-textured or sandy substrates North Flank LTA	No stressors identified within the plan area. Outside the plan area, oil and gas development, primarily, excessive grazing, recreation, road construction, and recreational off-road vehicles are listed as stressors.
<i>Phacelia glandulosa</i> var. <i>deserta</i> Desert Phacelia	Local endemic Limited populations Two occurrences within the plan area	Species of Conservation Concern	Species of Concern	G4/T2 Wyoming S2	Desert shrub and Wyoming big sagebrush Green River LTA	Off-road vehicle use or mineral exploration are noted stressors.

Source: Forest Service GIS 2023

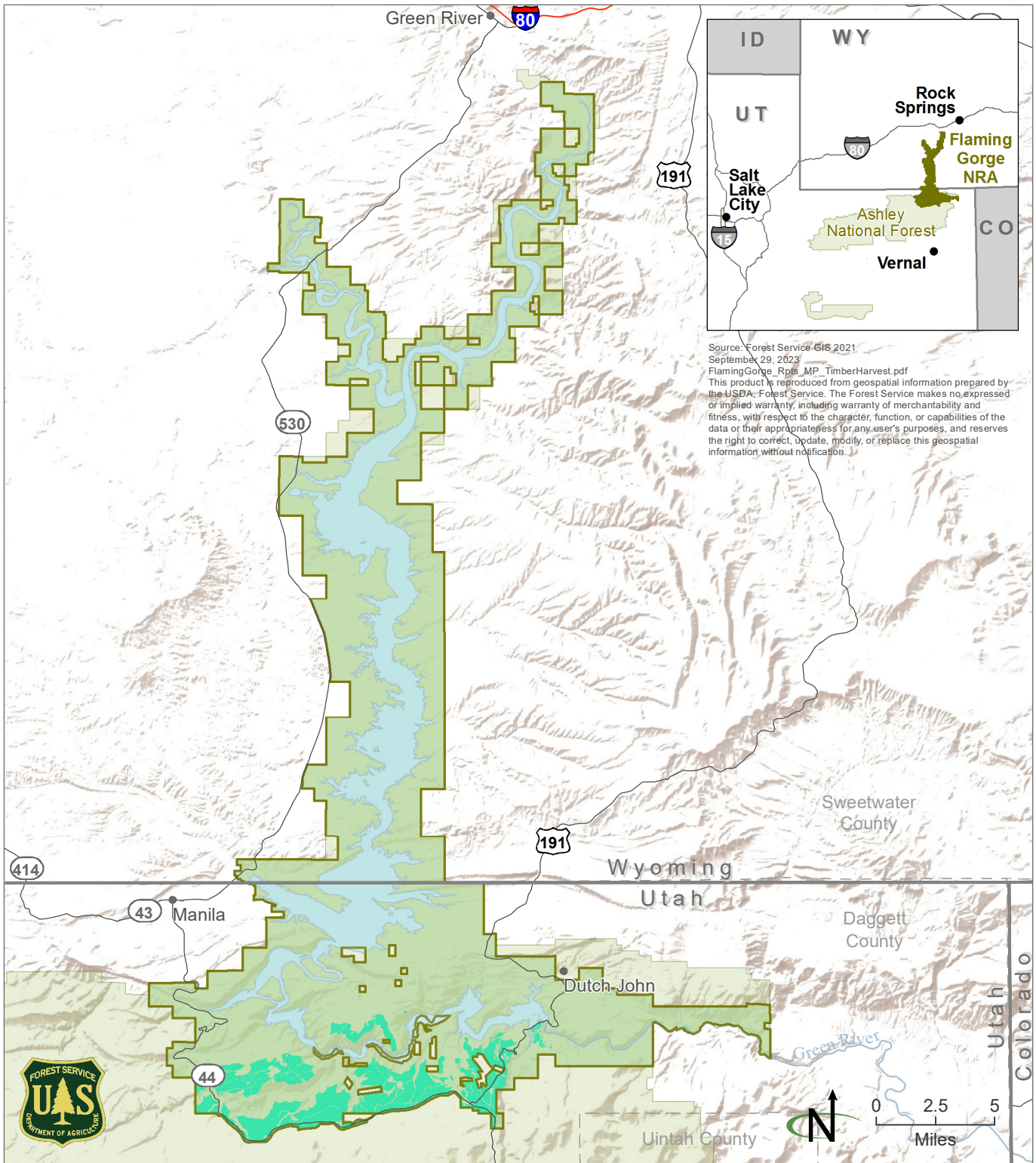


Figure 11, Timber Production Suitability

- Suitable for timber production
- Flaming Gorge NRA
- Ashley National Forest

Water

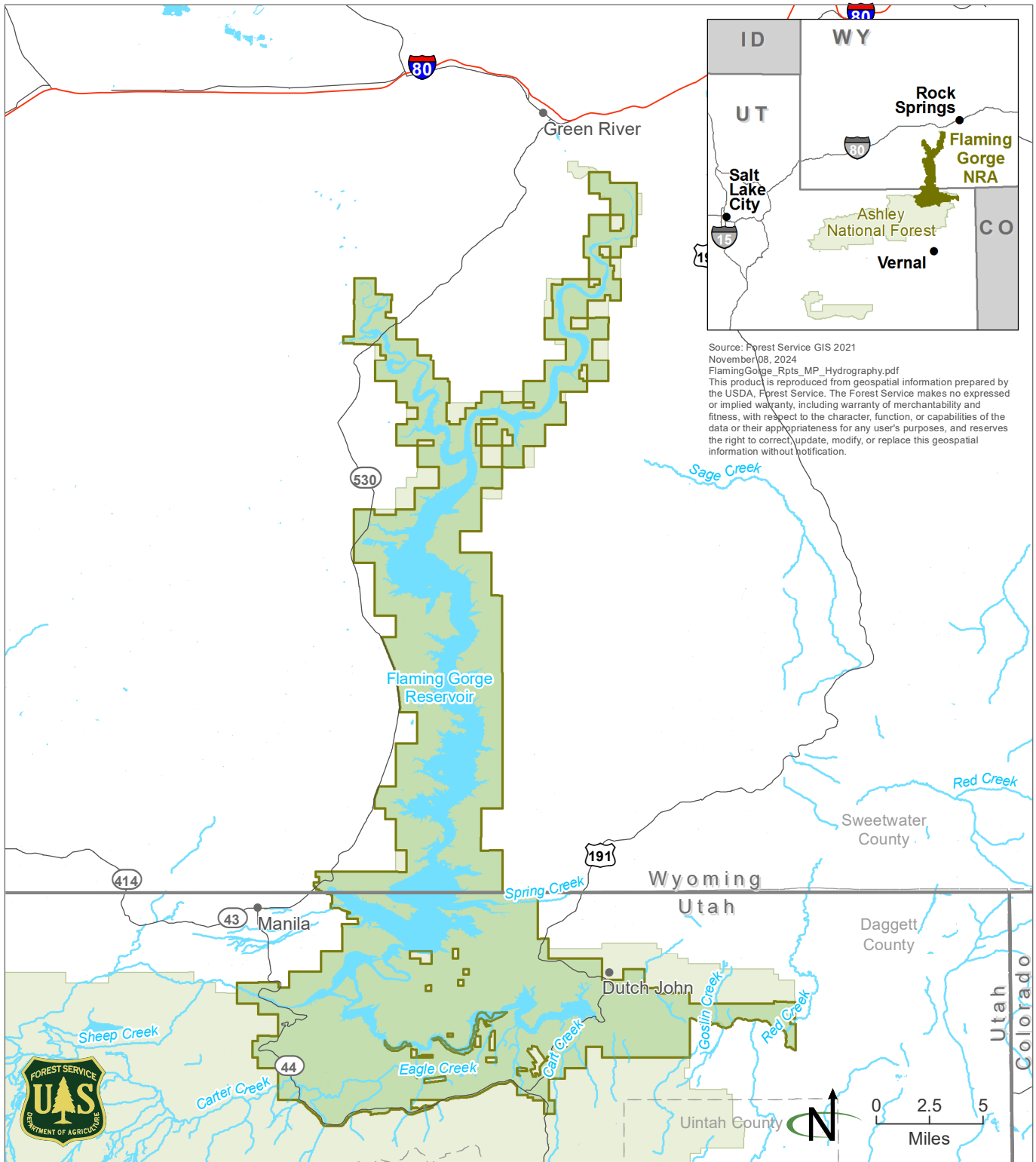
The predominant water feature in the FGNRA is Flaming Gorge Reservoir. At its full-pool elevation of 6,040 feet, the Reservoir covers approximately 42,000 acres, with over 370 miles of shoreline and a water capacity of 3,788,000 acre-feet (BOR 2022). Flaming Gorge Dam near Dutch John, Utah, impounds 91 miles of the Green River with the first 32-mile portion roughly paralleling the Utah-Wyoming border and the remaining 59 miles extending northward into Wyoming near the town of Green River. Flaming Gorge is one of the major reservoirs in the Colorado River Storage Project, second only to Lake Powell in terms of size and recreational popularity, with a contributing watershed area of over 19,000 square miles (Judd 1997).

Operation of the dam, its infrastructure, and for the purposes of the Colorado River Storage Project the reservoir below high pool are the jurisdiction of the BOR. Many factors determine the timing and magnitude of releases from the dam. Founding purposes for reservoirs under the Colorado River Project Act include water storage for state-designated beneficial uses (allowing Upper Basin States to utilize their Colorado River Compact apportionments), reclamation of arid lands, control of floods, and generation of hydroelectric power (BOR 2022). More recent agreements have included releases to support endangered fish populations and releases for drought response (BOR 2006, BOR 2023).

Near the state line is a morphological break between desert landscape in the Wyoming portion of the NRA and the ridges, canyons, and plateaus of the Utah portion. Precipitation varies from 8–11 inches in Wyoming portions of the recreation area to 16–18 inches in the Greendale Plateau (USFS 2009). Due to a relatively dry local climate and topography, the majority of streams in the FGNRA are ephemeral with flows limited to spring snowmelt and occasional summer storm events. The perennial channels primarily originate from source areas outside the FGNRA boundaries. Major perennial tributaries include Black's Fork River and Henry's Fork River. Other perennial streams include Sheep Creek, Carter Creek, Eagle Creek, Cart Creek, Goslin Creek, Red Creek, Spring Creek, Marsh Creek, and Sage Creek. These perennial channels are supported by groundwater during baseflow conditions and experience high flows during spring snowmelt and occasional summer thunderstorm events. Perennial streams and waterbodies are shown in figure 12.





Springs, seeps, wetlands, and riparian areas are present within the FGNRA, but they are more limited in distribution compared with adjacent areas of the Ashley National Forest. This is in part due to relatively low precipitation and the low occurrence of perennial waters in large portions of the FGNRA. Another factor is the large acreage of Flaming Gorge Reservoir and its fluctuating shoreline, which is not conducive to supporting wetland and riparian vegetation. In 2017, fen mapping for the Ashley National Forest was completed by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (Smith and Lemly 2017). The presence of wetlands that have a likelihood of containing fens is limited compared with other portions of the Ashley National Forest. Meadow Park and Dripping Springs are the two wetlands in the FGNRA most likely to contain fen/peatland features.

Minor earthen dams in the FGNRA exist at Greens Lake on the Greendale plateau. Small ponds have also been constructed at the Linwood wetland south of Linwood Bay and the Henry's Fork wetland north of Linwood Bay. A few natural pothole ponds exist on the Greendale plateau portion of the FGNRA.



Source: Forest Service GIS 2021
 November 08, 2024
 FlamingGorge_Rpts_MP_Hydrography.pdf
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Figure 12, Hydrology

-  Waterbody
-  Perennial stream
-  Flaming Gorge NRA
-  Ashley National Forest

Water Quality

The majority of waters in the FGNRA support state-designated beneficial use classifications. These include beneficial uses for domestic drinking water (1C), primary and secondary recreational contact (2A,2B), cold water aquatic life (3A), warm water aquatic life (3B), and agricultural uses (4). In the Utah portion of the FGNRA, streams listed for impairments include Birch Springs Draw (for selenium and total dissolved solids), Carter Creek (for aluminum), Cart Creek (for aluminum and low dissolved oxygen), and Red Creek (for benthic macroinvertebrates/bioassessments) (Utah 2022). The Utah portions of Flaming Gorge Reservoir are listed for elevated pH. The state lists the sources of these impairments as unknown. State priority to develop total maximum daily load strategies for these waters is low.

No Wyoming portions of the FGNRA contain 303(d)-listed waters designated as impaired. Three miles upstream of the FGNRA, the Bitter Creek/Killpecker Creek drainage enters the Green River at the town of Green River, Wyoming. These streams have been listed for E. coli and total dissolved solids (Wyoming 2020). Monitoring and restoration efforts are underway to address pollutant sources (WACD 2023).

An emerging water-quality issue for the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality is harmful cyanobacteria blooms (HCB), dense concentrations of photosynthetic cyanobacteria that can pose a risk to people, pets, and livestock (Wyoming 2020). From the Green River arm of Flaming Gorge Reservoir below the town of Green River, Wyoming, to approximately Buckboard Marina is one of the water reaches in the state with occurrences of these blooms. The state of Wyoming has developed an HCB action plan with procedural guidelines should a bloom be suspected. In recent years, the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality and the Ashley National Forest have cooperatively monitored Flaming Gorge Reservoir during late summer and autumn for HCB events.

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Chapter 3. Plan Area Direction

Vision

The FGNRA Management Plan is built on the foundation of the enabling legislation. Below is a summary of the key components of the enabling legislation and how this management plan addresses each:

1. **Public outdoor recreation benefits:** The FGNRA provides a diversity of topography, climate, and recreation opportunities suited to both summer and winter interests. This is emphasized through interpretation, developing or maintaining recreation infrastructure (such as boat ramps, day use areas, parking areas, and sanitation facilities), and minimizing recreation conflicts. In addition, the plan considers new or enhanced recreation opportunities such as establishing new paddle trails, constructing new motorized trails, widening existing motorized trails, designating a new campground, and designating a mountain bike complex.
2. **Conservation of scenic, scientific, historic, and other values contributing to public enjoyment:** From dramatic river gorges to alpine forests and high desert landscapes, the FGNRA contains outstanding scenery. These values are conserved through maintaining and protecting scenic byways and backway day use sites, and recognizing scenic attributes associated with the FGNRA for all management activities. Conservation of historic sites is accomplished through collaborations with the Wyoming and Utah Historic Preservation Offices and indigenous tribes to protect historic/prehistoric resources and develop interpretive sites where the public can view and appreciate the prehistoric and historic resources of the FGNRA. Scientific values are conserved through managing land use permit renewals and collaborating with other agencies and governments for monitoring, inventories, and research studies.
3. **Such management, utilization, and disposal of natural resources as in the Secretary of Agriculture's judgment will promote or are compatible with, and do not significantly impair the purpose for which the recreation area is established:** The FGNRA contains an abundance of natural resources which contribute to local economies and traditional uses, such as livestock grazing and timber. These are valid uses on the FGNRA and are managed to protect recreation, scenic, and historic values.

Management Direction

Cultural Resources

Desired Condition

01 Interpretative opportunities are provided in a variety of locations for the public to view and appreciate the prehistoric and historic resources of the FGNRA, including the unique attributes of the Flaming Gorge Reservoir.

Goal

01 Work collaboratively with Wyoming and Utah Historic Preservation Offices and indigenous Tribes to identify, maintain, and conserve historic/prehistoric sites within the FGNRA.

Objective

- 01 Within 5 years of the completion of the Management Plan, develop and construct an interpretive site for the public to learn about the indigenous and native people who lived in the area now designated as the Flaming Gorge NRA. Utilize partnerships for the construction, interpretation, and maintenance of interpretive resources.

Fire and Fuels

Desired Condition

- 01 Wildfire affected areas and other disturbed areas are managed to control the spread of cheatgrass, Halogeton, and other invasive species throughout the FGNRA.

Fish and Wildlife

Desired Condition

- 01 Resilient landscapes are improved, maintained, enhanced, and created for big game species in collaboration with partners, including development and updates to habitat management plans.
- 02 Where appropriate, maintain, enhance, restore and protect critical avian habitat in order to protect avian species during critical periods of their lifecycle and to provide opportunities for public viewing and appreciation of native bird species.
- 03 Non-consumptive use of wildlife is promoted through educational outreach or kiosks, enhanced wildlife viewing opportunities, research, photography and filming when and where appropriate.
- 04 Bare Top Mountain is managed for the protection and benefit of wildlife and their habitats in coordination with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.

Goal

- 01 Develop and implement effective conservation actions, habitat management strategies, research, and monitoring in collaboration with partners to provide for the maximum diversity, abundance, and population stability or enhancement of game and non-game wildlife species within the FGNRA.
- 02 Coordinate with and utilize partnerships with other agencies and governments, tribal governments, and the community to help elevate conservation, habitat management, monitoring, inventory, and scientific research efforts for wildlife species especially threatened and endangered species and species of greatest conservation concern.
- 03 Maintain or improve the world-class sport fisheries, including fish and riparian habitat in collaboration with partners (that is, State Wildlife Agencies, Tribal governments, other entities/agencies, and the community).
- 04 As appropriate, coordinate with partners when monitoring western monarch, bumble bees, hummingbirds, and other pollinator species populations and their habitats. This information could be used to enhance, conserve and protect habitat areas identified in the FGNRA that are important to pollinator life-cycles (such as Linwood Bay and the Green River corridor for monarchs).
- 05 Assist state wildlife agencies with greater sage-grouse conservation and habitat management.

- 06 Work collaboratively with Utah and Wyoming wildlife agencies and other partners to identify, maintain, enhance, restore, research and protect unique wildlife habitats.
- 07 Coordinate with state Wildlife Agencies regarding big game management plans and unit management plans.

Interpretation

Desired Condition

- 01 Interpretive sites inform visitors of the unique characteristics of roads, trails, water attractions, other resources, and management activities, such as fuels reduction. These sites inform visitors through personal experience and illustrative media including but not limited to graphic or video displays, audio tours, visitor guides, and road maps. By engaging with these sites, visitors gain a deeper understanding of the land. Vegetation around interpretive sites is maintained.
- 02 Interpretive sites meet Forest Service interpretive design standards and fit well within area settings. They are well maintained and draw visitors to them.

Minerals

Desired Condition

- 01 Mineral development, if present, is compatible with the enabling legislation of the NRA to manage for recreation, scenic, and historic values

Standard

- 01 Commercial sale of non-leasable common variety minerals (such as gravel, rock, or sand) within the FGNRA shall be prohibited because such developments are not compatible with and could impair the recreation, scenic, and historic values of the FGNRA.

Public Safety

Desired Condition

- 01 Flaming Gorge Reservoir no wake zones are identified, implemented, and adjusted based on nearby developed recreation facilities and reservoir levels.

Goal

- 01 Coordinate with Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Wyoming Department of Health, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Utah Department of Health and Human Services, Utah Department of Water Resources, Utah State Parks and Recreation, the Bureau of Reclamation, and Marina Special Use Permit holders in water-oriented recreation activity management and public safety requirements and needs. Maintain close cooperation with all groups and agencies involved with water-oriented activities.
- 02 Assist local, county, and State agencies to maintain a quality law enforcement program in coordination with Forest Service efforts through a cooperative law enforcement agreement. Explore opportunities to increase enforcement presence and education of laws and proper use.

Recreation and Facilities

Desired Condition

- 01 Developed boat ramps and day use areas are safe and well maintained. Boat ramps and day use areas have adequate parking and amenities for current use, anticipated future use, and changes to reservoir elevation.
- 02 There are many opportunities for water recreation, including but not limited to powerboating, waterskiing, paddle sports, and fishing. The Green River below the Flaming Gorge Dam provides fishing, floating, and rafting opportunities. These water recreation sites, including both river and reservoir locations, provide a high level of visitor satisfaction, and user conflicts are managed.
- 03 Facilities are designed to accommodate year-round use where appropriate.
- 04 Large public recreational developments or complexes are concentrated. Smaller satellite campgrounds, boating camps, rest stops, and observation sites are suited for and can be developed, when practical, to provide for developed and dispersed use. Adequate buffers between developments are provided. Where feasible, recreation areas are interconnected with motorized or nonmotorized trails.
- 05 Facilities and improvements are constructed and maintained to meet public need. Outdated or obsolete infrastructure is replaced with appropriate facilities that meet current and future recreation needs. They should be aesthetically pleasing and blend with or complement the surrounding area and include defensible space for wildfire.
- 06 Designated paddle trails provide unique opportunities for visitors to see and experience the FGNRA by kayak, paddleboard, or canoe. Beginner to advanced paddle trails are available. Paddle trails are designated to minimize conflicts between powerboaters and paddle users.
- 07 A wide range of mountain biking opportunities are available in the FGNRA for both novice and experienced users and there is a range of ride lengths.
- 08 Recreation facilities and periods of operation accommodate demands of visitors on the FGNRA. Tours and interpretation are available at least between Memorial Day and Labor Day and extended into shoulder seasons as need dictates and funding allows.
- 09 Motorboat launching only occurs at established boat ramps. Shoreline launching does not occur.
- 10 Shorelines maintain a natural appearance to the extent possible. Areas disturbed by motorized boat recreation use or littering are minimal.
- 11 Aquatic invasive species are mitigated through boat inspections and decontamination procedures in accordance with state law.
- 12 High use areas around boat launches are adequately identified and managed to avoid type of use conflicts for motorized and non-motorized activities, including shore fishing opportunities.
- 13 Developed recreation facilities and sites meet accessibility needs for visitors.
- 14 Dispersed camping opportunities are available throughout the FGNRA, and resource impacts are limited from these activities.

15 Scenic byway and backway day use sites within the FGNRA are developed and maintained through partnerships and provide interpretation information.

Goal

- 01 In coordination with local governments, stakeholders, user groups, and state wildlife, parks, and recreation agencies, evaluate opportunities to expand parking areas and recreation infrastructure at reservoir boat ramps, and trails access points. With these entities, identify opportunities to expand developed facility capacity, infrastructure, and services at existing developed recreation facilities and collaborate with state wildlife, parks, and recreation agencies in consideration of infrastructure funding opportunities.
- 02 Collaborate with state and local stakeholders and agencies to upgrade existing infrastructure. Prioritize upgrades in areas where safety is a concern and user density is overwhelming the recreation resource; assess low priority or unused sites for decommissioning, removal, or conversion to other recreation use.
- 03 In coordination with state and local stakeholders and agencies, explore additional options for managing capacity and distribution of demand/use at the Spillway boat launch site.
- 04 Examine opportunities for expanding winter recreation activities within the FGNRA through coordination with local user groups, stakeholders, and governments.
- 05 Continue collaboration with adjacent landowners, including Federal and state agencies regarding recreational opportunities that expand beyond FGNRA and Forest Service boundaries.
- 06 In coordination with affected agencies and stakeholders, including BOR, develop a reservoir operation action plan identifying jurisdiction and mitigation steps to be taken at points in reduced water level elevations.

Objective

- 01 Designate 10 miles of paddle trails within five years of plan approval, considering potential conflicts between motorized and non-motorized users.
- 02 Assess the feasibility of converting the South Buckboard Play Area to a designated campground within 5 years of plan approval.
- 03 Over the life of the plan, develop a mountain bike complex (for example, on Dowd Mountain, Greendale Junction, Buckboard recreation complex or Firehole Canyon), in collaboration with stakeholders.
- 04 The Green River Management Plan is updated through collaboration with stakeholders and partners within 5 years of completion of the FGNRA management plan.
- 05 Construct three group sites within the national recreation area within the next 10 years of plan approval.
- 06 Pave Antelope Flat Road within 10 years.

Guideline

- 01 New overnight campgrounds neighboring the Flaming Gorge Reservoir should be near but not directly adjacent to the high-water mark (6040 contour line) to reduce resource impacts and effects to water quality.

Scenery

Desired Condition

- 01 Management activities across all disciplines consider the scenic attributes associated with the FGNRA. Scenic values are protected and opportunities for scenic viewing are abundant.
- 02 Scenic attributes along the Red Canyon corridor are maintained and protected.

Special Land Uses

Standard

- 01 Land use permit renewals shall only be authorized if they are compatible with and do not significantly impair the recreation, scenic, scientific, and historic values of the FGNRA. Operation and maintenance plans of existing permits must be compatible with and do not significantly impair the recreation, scenic, scientific, and historic values of the FGNRA.

Guideline

- 01 Special land uses should be authorized based on a demonstrated public need where the need cannot be met outside the FGNRA and where the foreseeable effects on other existing or potential uses are acceptable.
- 02 New utility transmission infrastructure in the FGNRA are suitable only within the designated corridors. Buried transmission, utilities, and telecommunications lines are suitable along existing or new Forest Service System roads.

Transportation

Desired Condition

- 01 Motorized and non-motorized trails are present throughout the FGNRA and are maintained and constructed in a sustainable manner and are located to minimize user conflicts.
- 02 Communities surrounding the FGNRA are connected through designation of motorized routes where feasible.
- 03 Adequate access to the Flaming Gorge Reservoir shoreline is available through Forest Service System Roads and Trails.

Goal

- 01 Evaluate opportunities to design and construct new trails to connect with existing trails in coordination with local user groups and in consideration of local trails master plans.
- 02 In coordination with state and local agencies, private landowners, and adjacent Federal land management agencies, address continuity of motorized routes within and adjacent to the FGNRA.

03 In coordination with user groups, evaluate opportunities to widen motorized trails in areas where doing so would enhance trail sustainability.

04 In collaboration with state and local stakeholders, identify opportunities for e-bike use on existing nonmotorized designated trails.

Water

Goal

01 Cooperate with the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality and Utah Department of Environmental Quality, the Sweetwater County Health Department, and the Tri-County Health Department to conduct water quality monitoring for harmful cyanobacterial blooms, waterborne pathogens, and other water quality issues. In the event of a harmful cyanobacterial bloom in the Wyoming portion of Flaming Gorge Reservoir, follow procedures prescribed to resource management agencies in the Harmful Cyanobacterial Bloom Action Plan for Publicly Accessible Waterbodies in Wyoming, including cooperating with the Wyoming Department of Health and Sweetwater County Health Department to notify the public when a Bloom Advisory or a Toxin Advisory is issued for Flaming Gorge Reservoir by the Wyoming Department of Health. In the event of a harmful algal bloom in Utah, coordinate with Utah Department of Water Quality and Tri-County Health Department to notify the public.

Management Approaches

General

01 Review state and county resource plans when identifying and developing projects and actions.

Cultural Resources

01 Incidents of damage to archaeological or historic sites on the FGNRA are actively investigated within two weeks of their report when they violate the Archaeological Resources Protection Act. Individuals who cause the damage are issued civil penalties or are prosecuted as appropriate.

02 Heritage tourism is encouraged as a component of public recreation.

Fire and Fuels

01 New and existing forest system routes may function as fuel breaks where appropriate to the location and vegetation type.

Fish and Wildlife

01 Consider the direction provided by the State of Wyoming Mule Deer and Antelope Migration Corridor Protection Executive Order and Utah's Wildlife Migration Initiative for future corridor identifications or designations and associated protections.

Interpretation

01 Provide availability of visitor center hours to accommodate seasons and hours of peak use.

- 02 Evaluate opportunities for additional interpretation of historic, geographic, and areas of significance on the FGNRA. Examine use of technology at these and existing sites for further interpretive opportunities.

Public Safety

- 01 Engage with partner agencies including the US Coast Guard, Bureau of Reclamation, state of Wyoming, and state of Utah on management of safety and boating infrastructure on the reservoir.
- 02 Update facility and travel infrastructure and improvement and maintenance plan each year to prioritize high use areas operations, maintenance, and improvements.

Rangeland Management

- 01 Notify the public of the importance of keeping gates on allotment and pasture fences closed through signage.
- 02 In areas of the FGNRA, utilize and continue to implement the Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the Bureau of Land Management in Utah and Wyoming to manage livestock grazing permits on the FGNRA.

Recreation and Facilities

- 01 Maintain up to date master development plans for recreation special use permitted areas that are consistent with state and local plans to the greatest extent possible.
- 02 Implement methods for providing sun and wind protection when constructing or reconstructing developed recreation facilities.
- 03 Communicate and coordinate with the BOR regarding management of the shoreline of the Flaming Gorge Reservoir below the high-water mark, anticipated dam releases, and BOR facilities as well as increases in flows on the Green River below the Flaming Gorge Dam for public safety and resource protection.
- 04 At developed marinas, place special emphasis on providing for boat and water-oriented sanitation needs, including floating toilets and pump out stations.
- 05 The length of season that facilities remain open depends on design, demand, staff capacity, available funds, and changing climatic conditions. If demand is low and/or funds are not available to maintain them to existing standards, they are closed after considering other alternatives.
- 06 Construct additional vehicle parking and sanitation facilities in areas where concentrated public use is causing adverse environmental effects or take administrative measures to control such use.
- 07 Educate the public about responsible use and the rules and regulations of the FGNRA and ensure access to recreation and use information is readily available for visitors. Utilize social media, print, and other forms of media for outreach.
- 08 Examine innovative ways to track visitor use and implement methods where feasible.
- 09 Map existing mountain bike trails on the FGNRA. Evaluate non-system routes for potential inclusion in the Forest Service trails system. Audit existing trails for safety and sustainability. Coordinate with counties to implement trails master plans where FGNRA projects are envisioned.

- 10 Continue management planning for each segment of the reservoir shoreline which is receiving concentrated recreational use.
- 11 Identify and collaboratively work with affected partners for recreation and other uses. Develop and/or maintain existing MOUs with associated organizations and complete coordination as needed.
- 12 Consider opportunities for use of contracts, concessionaires, or permits for operation of recreation sites based on individual cost/benefit, economic viability, and site functionality.
- 13 Prioritize existing and proposed recreation sites and facilities based on use and benefit. Allocate resources and funding to areas of greatest benefit and need and prioritize high use area improvements and maintenance.
- 14 Utilize and incorporate technology to assist in management of recreation areas and enhancing visitor use in the FGNRA.
- 15 Seek opportunities to expand collaborative partnerships, mutual interest cost sharing, and shared stewardship work. Explore innovative partner opportunities for funding and managing recreation sites and infrastructure.
- 16 Evaluate opportunities for recent or future recreation activities, including rock climbing and or bouldering and equestrian use. Facilities and improvements are developed based on prioritization, public demand and need.
- 17 Maintain the Little Hole Trail as a National Recreation Trail and consider funding and resources to maintain and/or improve its use.
- 18 Manage the Green River below the Flaming Gorge Dam according to the most recent Green River Management Plan
- 19 Operate water systems within state guidelines and requirements. Upgrade and replace equipment and infrastructure when needed or required.
- 20 Maintain MOU with the BOR regarding BOR-owned facilities and areas of jurisdiction, including lands below the flow lines of the reservoir (6040 feet)
- 21 Cooperate with the BOR to maintain restroom facilities at the Flaming Gorge Dam Visitor's Center open to the public visiting the dam and the adjacent USFS day use site.

Special Land Uses

- 01 Telecommunication sites are managed according to the most recent site management plans. New sites will have management plans developed as appropriate.

Timber

- 01 Wherever possible, harvest timber either by use of the existing road system, by winter logging without roads, or by using temporary roads which can be effectively closed and obliterated following logging.

Transportation

- 01 Identify and prioritize existing roads and parking lots in need of slurry seal or crack sealing. Collaborate with national and regional USFS offices and local partners to identify and pool resources

for road and parking lot maintenance. Prioritize surface maintenance on roads where unacceptable environmental damage is present due to erosion or widening.

- 02 Provide route maintenance to avoid watershed problems on system roads and strive to eliminate use on unauthorized roads, unless an analysis determines that an unauthorized road is suitable for inclusion in the official transportation system for recreation use, administrative use, seasonal use, or to provide a fire break or other resource benefits.
- 03 Evaluate current and future uses to account for new types of recreation vehicles.

Water

- 01 Manage and utilize Forest Service water rights within the FGNRA to meet existing and future Forest Service uses.
- 02 Support partner efforts in addressing water quality and ability to meet water quality standards in the reservoir.

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