

Appendix F – Forest Plan Excerpts

Below are excerpts from the Forest Plan relevant to roads and trails (travel management) in the RWD project area.

1.5.2 Management Challenges

Balancing Multiple Uses

Land management conflicts are common within the planning area, especially as people engaging in different uses increasingly compete for the same piece of land. SJNF and TRFO lands that are adjacent to private lands (referred to as the wildland-urban interface, or WUI) can also create a number of management challenges, including fire management, fuels reduction, recreation conflicts, and wildlife habitat preservation/protection as well as energy and mineral exploration and development. Complex land ownership patterns also create management challenges, including issues and conflicts in relation to boundaries, easements, public access, and roads.

2.2 Terrestrial Ecosystems and Plant Species

Desired Conditions

2.2.2 Non-climate ecosystem stresses (e.g., high road densities, water depletions, air and water pollution) are reduced to improve the resilience and resistance of ecosystems to the future dynamics of a changing climate.

2.2.34 **Alpine** - Alpine terrestrial ecosystems sustain their ecosystem diversity. They display a diverse composition of desirable native plant species and vegetation communities (including fellfield and turf types). Invasive plant species are absent or rare.

Objectives

2.2.45 Within 10 years, restore or improve soil productivity and soil carbon on at least 20 miles of road that will be closed or decommissioned on the SJNF and 5 miles of routes that will be closed or decommissioned on TRFO lands.

2.2.64 Over the next 20 years, enhance the resiliency of alpine ecosystems and provide refugia for alpine-dependent species by removing non-climate stressors that result in adverse impacts to alpine ecosystems (e.g., unmanaged livestock grazing, unmanaged motorized recreation) from 100 acres on SJNF lands that are forb-dominated alpine habitat.

Standards

2.2.65 The construction of new permanent roads and utilities must not occur in protected areas in order to protect the ecological integrity of the terrestrial ecosystems within them, prevent ecosystem fragmentation, prevent the disruption of wildlife travel corridors, and prevent the establishment and spread of invasive plants.

Guidelines

2.2.69 Agency actions should not adversely affect the long-term soil productivity or carbon storage of terrestrial ecosystems.

2.2.70 Ground-disturbing management activities should not occur on lands that have a high potential for mass movement, including lands associated with SJNF and TRFO soil survey map units 254, 386, 606, 720, 926, 20511D, 30506D, 34301D, 34306D, 34506D, 50803D, 50806D, 70806D, 70807D, 74803D, 80604D, 80803D, and 80804D, or lands that display evidence of slope instability, unless site-specific field analysis indicates that mass movement is not likely to occur on those lands.

2.2.72 Agency actions should avoid or otherwise mitigate long-term adverse impacts in terrestrial ecosystems that have plant communities with G1 or G2 NatureServe Plant Community

conservation status ranks in order to maintain the ecological integrity of those rare plant communities.

2.3 Terrestrial Wildlife

Desired Conditions

2.3.9 Ecosystems and habitat conditions for terrestrial wildlife species sensitive to human disturbance are maintained.

2.3.22 **MIS: Elk** - Management activities and human disturbance levels (especially in severe winter range, winter concentration areas, and calving grounds) provide effective habitat capable of meeting state population objectives

2.3.11 Habitat continuity and travel corridors exist and persist to facilitate species movement and establishment into newly suitable areas as a result of changing habitats.

2.3.14 Disturbances from management activities occur at levels that support critical life functions and sustain key habitat characteristics for wildlife special status species.

2.3.17 Management actions maintain or improve habitat conditions for special status species, contributing to the stability and/or recovery of these species.

Guidelines

2.3.59 Projects or activities that adversely impact pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) and elk production areas should be limited or avoided. This will keep reproductive success from being negatively impacted from management activities by using access restrictions during the following periods:

- Pronghorn: May 1–July 1
- Elk: May 15–June 30

2.3.60 Management activities and access should be limited or avoided in critical winter range, severe winter range, and winter concentration areas for pronghorn, elk, and mule deer during the following times to keep survival and reproduction from being negatively impacted (see Figures 2.3.1, 2.3.2, and 2.3.5):

- Pronghorn: December 1–April 30
- Elk: December 1–April 30
- Mule deer: December 1–April 30

2.3.62 **Ungulates:** Projects or activities in big game critical winter range, winter concentration areas, severe winter range, production areas, and important migration corridors should be designed and conducted in a manner that preserves and does not reduce habitat effectiveness within those mapped areas.

2.3.63 **Ungulates:** In order to provide for healthy ungulate populations capable of meeting state population objectives, anthropomorphic activity and improvements across the planning area should be designed to maintain and continue to provide effective habitat components that support critical life functions. This includes components of size and quality on the landscape providing connectivity to seasonal habitats (wildlife travel corridors), production areas, critical winter range, severe winter range, and winter concentration areas, along with other habitat components necessary to support herd viability.

2.13 Access and Transportation Management - Route Densities for Wildlife Habitat

Route Densities for Wildlife Habitat: The intent of this guideline is to ensure no net loss of existing habitat effectiveness within the areas listed below. In order to maintain wildlife habitat effectiveness of SJNF lands, road and motorized trail densities should be addressed when analyzing and approving management actions that affect motorized routes. Where management actions would result in road and motorized trail densities exceeding 1 mile/square mile on SJNF lands in the areas listed below, actions should be designed to maintain habitat effectiveness on SJNF lands throughout each mapped polygon. Habitat effectiveness for this guideline is considered maintained when road

densities within the CPW mapped areas on SJNF lands listed below are less than or equal to 1 mile/square mile. When road densities exceed 1 mile/square mile within the CPW mapped areas on SJNF lands listed below, densities should not be increased without mitigation designed to maintain habitat effectiveness.

Roads used to develop route density calculations include roads on NFS lands only, regardless of road ownership, that are a) open year-long or seasonally to public use and b) closed to public use, but are used for administrative access or are authorized by contract, permit, or other written authorization. Included in these calculations are maintenance level 2–5 NFS roads. Also included for this calculation are NFS trails that are designated for motorized use.

Roads and motorized trails with design features sufficient to maintain habitat effectiveness (such as seasonal closures that are determined to be sufficient mitigation), as determined by the USFS biologist, should not be used for final density calculations.

Non-motorized trails and those roads that are closed to all motorized use and/or are in storage are not used for route density calculations. Temporary roads to be used for 5 years or less are not included in these calculations.

2.4 Riparian and Wetland Ecosystems

Desired Conditions

2.4.1 Riparian area and wetland ecosystems have a diverse composition of desirable native hydrophytic plants that are vigorous and self-perpetuating. Invasive plant species are absent or rare.

2.4.2 Riparian area and wetland ecosystems have vegetation cover sufficient to catch sediment, dissipate energy, prevent erosion, stabilize stream banks, enhance aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitat, and promote floodplain development.

Standards

2.4.19 Long term adverse effects to the hydrology, soils, and vegetation of fens and hanging gardens from management activities in or adjacent to them (including motorized travel, road construction, water pumping, and peat removal) must not occur.

2.4.20 Agency actions in protected areas must not adversely affect the long-term ecological integrity of the riparian area and wetland ecosystems within them.

2.4.21 Management actions must not cause long-term change away from desired conditions in riparian or wetland vegetation communities.

2.5 Aquatic Ecosystems and Fisheries

Desired Conditions

2.5.1 Long-term sustainability of aquatic ecosystems is maintained.

2.5.2 Streams, lakes, riparian vegetation, and adjacent uplands provide habitats adequate to maintain healthy aquatic ecosystems capable of supporting a variety of native and desired non-native aquatic communities.

Guidelines

2.5.23 Except where barriers are beneficial and necessary to achieve conservation goals for certain aquatic species, fragmentation of aquatic habitats and isolation of aquatic species should be avoided.

2.5.24 Sediment delivery to streams occupied by MIS or threatened, endangered, or sensitive species should be avoided.

2.5.25 Activities that may cause sedimentation to amphibian habitats should be minimized.

2.6 Water Resources

Objectives to Maintain or Improve Watershed Condition and Stream/Floodplain Function

2.6.23 Annually decommission 6 linear miles or more of unneeded routes that may consist of roads and/or trails on SJNF lands. ...Watersheds listed in Volume III, Appendix I could be considered priority for decommissioning efforts. Watersheds designated as priority through the USFS Watershed Condition Framework should also be focus areas for route decommissioning.

Objectives for Water Quality

2.6.21 Over the life of the LRMP, implement BMPs to minimize management impacts to water quality on TRFO and SJNF lands. The effectiveness of BMPs will be improved if necessary through adaptive management.

Standards

2.6.30 Activities must not be allowed within aquatic management zones that will cause a long-term change from desired conditions. The protection or improvement of riparian values, water quality, aquatic community, and for long-term stream health in these areas must be emphasized. Aquatic management zones have a minimum horizontal width from the top of each bank of 100 feet or the mean height of the mature late-seral vegetation, whichever is greater.

Guidelines

2.6.32 Roads and trails that are removed from the SJNF transportation network, as well as maintenance level 1 roads (i.e., roads that have been closed to the public but may be used in the future principally for administrative purposes), should be treated sufficiently where no further management intervention would be necessary in order to sustain long-term natural processes. This will avoid future risks to watershed functions, water quality, and/or aquatic habitat. Sufficient treatments may include removal of unstable fills, effective and permanent breaching of drainage ditches, elimination of persistent in-sloped road surfaces; complete removal of stream-crossing structures and associated fills with restoration of floodplains, and the maintenance or restoration of fish passages.

2.13 Access and Transportation Management – Road Densities for Water Quality and Watershed Health

2.13.27 Road Density Guideline for Water Quality and Watershed Health on SJNF Lands: In order to protect water quality and watershed function, road densities on SJNF lands should not exceed 2 miles/square mile within any U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 6th level Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) watershed. In order to protect major surface source water protection areas for municipalities within USGS 6th level HUC watersheds, road densities on NFS lands should not exceed 1.5 miles/square mile. If new road construction is necessary on NFS lands within an area exceeding this density guideline, management actions should be considered that would result in post-construction road densities that are equal to or less than the pre-construction density. The following parameters and constraints will be used to calculate road density for water quality and watershed health:

2.13.27a Roads used to develop road density calculations include those roads on NFS lands only, regardless of road ownership, that are a) open year-long or seasonally to public use and b) closed to public use, but are used for administrative access or are authorized by contract, permit, or other written authorization. Included in these calculations are NFS maintenance level 2–5 roads. Non-motorized and motorized trails and those roads that are closed to all motorized use and/or are in storage are not used for road density calculations. Temporary roads to be used for 5 years or less are not included in these calculations.

2.13.27b Road densities will be calculated within USGS 6th level HUC watersheds on NFS lands only.

2.13.27c Municipal watersheds are USGS 6th level HUC watersheds where the surface source water intake exists for an incorporated town, city, or other municipality with a public water supply. The MOU between the USFS Region 2 and the CDPHE states, “Revised Forest Plans will provide direction and desired conditions for municipal supply watersheds/source water areas to protect water quality while allowing for multiple use outputs (per 36 CFR 251.9 and FSM 2542).”

2.13.27d Data used for density calculations will be based on the best available information at the time of analysis.

2.7 Livestock and Rangeland Management

2.8 Invasive Species

Desired Conditions

2.8.2 Federal lands have a transportation system composed of specific roads and trails that do not contribute to the spread of invasive species along travel corridors.

2.8.3 Invasive species, both terrestrial and aquatic, are absent or rare within the planning area, and are not influencing native populations or ecosystem function.

2.8.4 Invasive species are not introduced or spread within protected areas.

2.8.5 Management activities do not contribute to the spread of invasive annual plants or other invasive species

2.9 Timber and Other Forest Products

Desired Conditions

2.9.1 Forest vegetation management on SJNF and TRFO lands that results in, among other objectives, meeting needs or demands for forest product offerings (commercial, personal, or other use) is done in a manner that:

- maintains or improves ecosystem function, resilience, and sustainability;
- supports, at least, the current level of economic activity in the local timber industry;
- provides economic or social support to local communities;
- ensures current and future needs for Native American tribal use, including that associated with special forest products (e.g., teepee poles);
- utilizes, to the fullest extent practicable, potential products including sawtimber, poles, topwood, or slash (e.g., limbs, foliage);
- supports innovation in utilization, including conversion of cut-tree mass into biofuels, pellets, biochar, or other useful products;
- efficiently balances or reduces costs of implementation of treatment activities; and
- anticipates climate-related plant succession changes (such as favoring heat- or drought-resistant tree species as leave trees, or in reforestation).

2.13 Access and Travel Management

Introduction - Motorized Travel Suitability and OHV Area Designations

A key component of access and travel management is the identification of areas where motorized travel is prohibited, where it is allowed, and any use limitations in areas where it is allowed. While the BLM and USFS use very similar criteria in determining suitable locations for motorized travel,

the agencies do have different processes for identifying areas where motorized travel is allowed and prohibited.

The USFS and the BLM have agency-specific direction for the management of motorized travel and OHV use. The USFS Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212, Subparts A, B, and C) requires that each national forest designate a system of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use by vehicle class and, if appropriate, by time of year. The rule addresses any future proliferation of user-created routes by prohibiting cross-country motorized travel (except in small designated areas). The BLM has similar requirements for motorized off-road use set forth in 43 CFR 8340 and 8342. While travel management plans developed under the USFS and BLM direction cited above will result in site-specific, route by route designations, this LRMP does not. Rather, the area classifications made in this LRMP provide a framework for future route-by-route designation. Some of the criteria used for the eventual designation of specific routes would include the need for access, impacts to private property, desired recreation opportunities, erosion potential and slope, resource protection, route density, and wildlife habitat considerations.

A travel management plan is not intended to provide evidence bearing on or addressing the validity of any assertion associated with Revised Statute 2477 (R.S. 2477). R.S. 2477 refers to a law passed by Congress in 1866 that provided that “the right-of-way for the construction of highways over public lands, not reserved for public uses, is hereby granted” (43 USC 932). Although the 1866 act was repealed by the FLPMA in 1976, rights associated with R.S. 2477 were preserved. R.S. 2477 rights are determined through a process that is entirely independent of the BLM’s or USFS’s LRMP planning process. Consequently, travel management planning should not take into consideration R.S. 2477 assertions or evidence. Travel management planning should be founded on an independently determined purpose and need that is based on resource uses and associated access to public lands and waters. At such time as a decision is made on R.S. 2477 assertions, the USFS or BLM will adjust its travel routes accordingly.

Travel management decisions for motorized route designations on NFS lands are illustrated on a Motor Vehicle Use Map, which is updated annually to reflect any new travel management updates. BLM route designations are illustrated on a travel map that is published in conjunction with any new travel management decision. Motorized travel off the designated roads, motorized trails or areas, or otherwise inconsistent with the designations displayed on a Motor Vehicle Use Map or BLM travel map is prohibited, unless the motorized use has been specifically exempted under USFS or BLM direction or by written authorization.

Introduction - USFS Motorized Use Classifications

For NFS lands, overground motorized suitability is divided into three classes: 1) unsuitable, 2) suitable, and 3) suitable opportunity areas. Unsuitable areas include wilderness areas and other areas that are generally not conducive to road or motorized trail system development for resource, habitat, and/or constructability reasons. Suitable areas are those that have an existing developed road and/or motorized trail system that, for the most part, serves the recreation and resource access needs of the particular area. Suitable areas would not generally be considered for net overall expansion of the transportation system. Suitable opportunity areas are those that have an existing road and/or motorized trail system, and where there is potential to improve the system by adding to the existing system of routes. Changes to the existing system (such as to address resource concerns or enhance recreation experiences) are allowed within unsuitable, suitable, and suitable opportunity areas, including the elimination or decommissioning of roads and trails. Areas with specific management (as identified in Section 3.0 of the LRMP) may have additional travel management restrictions.

A number of travel landscapes on the SJNF have not undergone site-specific overground travel management planning prior to publication of this LRMP. For these landscapes, travel suitability as depicted on Figure 2.13.1 primarily reflects current management and is subject to change through a plan amendment based on site-specific analysis that will be completed through the travel management planning process. Travel management planning will be initiated in these areas after this LRMP is finalized, and in some cases is already underway.

Program Emphasis

Access and opportunity to experience areas through both motorized and non-motorized travel is a key component of recreation, as well as a primary management emphasis for the SJNF and TRFO. Efforts will focus on the designation of effective motorized and non-motorized travel routes over the long-term, consistent with desired conditions. Signing, enforcement, public information, and route maintenance and restoration will take place, as appropriate.

The transportation system program will emphasize a minimum transportation system that provides safe and efficient public and agency access to the public lands. Agency-specific travel management planning processes will be used to identify management opportunities for ensuring that the systems are efficiently maintained, environmentally compatible, and responsive to agency and public needs. Agency managers will work towards aligning the total miles of roads and trails within SJNF and TRFO lands with fiscal constraints. Opportunities will be sought to shift road management to the appropriate public road authority when it is determined that a specific road is primarily used for purposes other than SJNF (FRTA) access, is used for mail delivery, school bus routes, or some other local governmental purpose, or is used for year-round residential access to private property within or adjacent to SJNF.

Reconstruction and maintenance activities will focus on diminishing impacts to resources, particularly water resources and aquatic ecosystems, and improving roadway safety while reducing the backlog of deferred maintenance.

Travel management planning during LRMP implementation will result in the designation of a system of roads, trails, and areas for motorized use by vehicle class and season of use. The principal goal of travel management planning is to reduce the development of unmanaged roads and trails and the associated impacts to water resources and aquatic ecosystems, wildlife conflict impacts, and user conflicts. The travel management planning process aims to provide a variety of road and trail access for recreation, special uses, other forest resource management, and fire protection activities. Planning, design, and operation will seek to maximize user experience while addressing safety and resource protection needs.

Desired Conditions

2.13.1 The transportation system within the SJNF and TRFO planning area consists of roads, high-clearance or primitive roads, trails, and bridges that are fiscally sustainable and safe as appropriate for the designated use or desired user experience; they allow for the use of, and enjoyment by, the public, and they meet resource management objectives. Sufficient condition surveys and inspections are conducted to promote road safety and prioritize road maintenance expenditures.

2.13.2 The SJNF and TRFO transportation system provides reasonable and legal access for resource management and recreation; it is dynamic and adaptable to resource and user needs.

All alternatives progress towards these desired conditions with some variation in long term maintenance costs. See EIS.

2.13.3 SJNF and TRFO destination and loop trails exist for motorized and non-motorized recreation users. New trail development within the planning area focuses on the creation of loop

opportunities and when feasible, using existing routes to do so, when such use does not compromise the intent and sustainability of the route. New routes within the planning area are designed with the goals of preserving settings, complementing the landscape, and providing the desired user outcomes/benefits.

2.13.4 Public access to SJNF or TRFO lands that cross private lands and/or cross other jurisdictions is acquired, retained or improved through proper authorization and coordination with adjacent landowners.

2.13.5 The road and trail systems on the SJNF and TRFO have adequate destination signage, mapping, and route markers to assist transportation system users in navigating throughout the planning area.

2.13.6 The public has access to information about the SJNF and TRFO transportation system (including specific travel route designations, available recreational opportunities, environmental stewardship guidelines, and safe travel information).

2.13.7 Motorized use on SJNF and TRFO lands occurs only on designated roads and trails, as well as in small designated open areas (except as exempted by 36 CFR 212.51 and 43 CFR 8340). No new unauthorized or user-created routes develop within SJNF or TRFO lands. Any addition of new designated routes to the transportation system will be analyzed using the appropriate planning process and level of environmental analysis.

2.13.8 Roads and trails within the SJNF and TRFO that are identified for closure are decommissioned and re-established with native vegetation cover.

2.13.10 Travel management plans are complete for all SJNF and TRFO lands within 5 years of adopting this LRMP. Travel management planning remains a continuous process designed to improve the transportation system on SJNF and TRFO lands.

2.13.11 Motorized and non-motorized users, as well as local, state, tribal, and other federal agencies, are actively engaged in travel management planning, route designation and implementation, and route monitoring on SJNF and TRFO lands.

2.13.12 Transportation system components on SJNF and TRFO lands are designed, constructed, and maintained to avoid encroaching onto streams and/or onto riparian areas and wetland ecosystems in ways that impact channel fluctuation or channel geometry (the relationships between channel discharge and channel cross-sectional factors, such as area, width, and depth). Sediment delivery from the transportation system does not measurably impact pool frequency, pool habitat, and/or spawning habitats.

2.13.13 The character of roadless areas on the SJNF is maintained in order to preserve large expanses of undeveloped lands that can be managed for wildlife habitat, scenic quality, and recreation.

Objectives

2.13.16 On the SJNF, transfer jurisdiction of roads identified through travel management planning as having predominant use that is inconsistent with the mission of the jurisdictional managing authority to a managing authority whose mission is consistent with the road use and is willing to accept the road transfer. ...

2.13.17 Perform maintenance activities annually on 75% of SJNF roads maintained for passenger vehicles (NFS maintenance level 3, 4, and 5 roads). 2.13.19 Develop travel management plans in accordance with the designation criteria in 36 CFR 212, Subpart B, for NFS lands and 43 CFR 8342.1 for BLM lands. Routes that are not included in the designated motorized transportation system will be evaluated for their resource impact potential. Those with high potential for resource impacts will be prioritized for decommissioning as part of the implementation plan for each

individual travel management plan decision. Each implementation plan will identify those routes prioritized for decommissioning, the method(s) that may be used, and a schedule for completion.

Standards

2.13.21 SJNF and TRFO road construction and reconstruction must be designed and constructed in accordance with the most recent applicable agency design and construction direction, as well as applicable Federal Highway Administration adopted design standards for the corresponding transportation facility.

Guidelines - Road and Trail Maintenance

2.13.25 Road and trail maintenance investment on SJNF lands should be prioritized by a travel analysis that categorizes investment priority based on route value to public lands and loss of agency investment, as well as risk to the environment and the traveling public. The following risk categories and strategies should be used to categorize management and investments:

- **High-Value/Low-Risk Routes:** The route condition should be preserved through annual maintenance. Roads in this category that have high value for private access should be considered for transfer to the appropriate jurisdictional managing entity.
- **High-Value/High-Risk Routes:** These routes should receive first priority for investment and maintenance funding (in order for them to be restored to appropriate standard[s] and to reduce resource risks). Roads in this category that have a high value for private access should be considered for transfer to the appropriate jurisdictional managing entity.
- **Low-Value/High-Risk Routes:** These routes should receive the highest priority in order to reduce maintenance level or maintenance intensity. Roads in this category may be considered for conversion to trails or otherwise be considered for decommissioning.
- **Low-Value/Low-Risk Routes:** These routes should receive the lowest priority for maintenance funding. Consideration should be given to converting the roads to trails. These routes should be considered for decommissioning or reduction in maintenance level or intensity.

Guidelines – Route Density

See Wildlife and Water sections above

2.14 Recreation

Introduction - Dispersed Recreation Experiences

Dispersed recreation will continue to be an important benefit offered within the planning area. Dispersed recreation includes both day and overnight use and provides important recreational benefits, which include the opportunity to enjoy natural landscapes, escape from crowds, engage in physical exercise, and/or recreate with family and friends. The management of these benefits will seek to balance the strong desire people have for freedom of choice regarding recreation activities, while providing for adequate protection of cultural and natural resources and the need to manage conflicting recreation uses. In spite of the large expanse of undeveloped areas available for dispersed recreation use, not every acre is suitable for every use. Management planning must balance the competing recreational uses with resource protection.

Introduction - Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

The ROS offers a framework that establishes recreational settings (based on access, remoteness, naturalness, built environment, social encounters, visitor impacts, and management) within the planning area. The resulting recreation zones are shown on the “ROS Settings Maps,” with separate maps for summer and winter activities (see Figures 2.14.2 and 2.14.3). The ROS zones for the various alternatives are presented in Volume III, Appendix E. These maps show broad desired

setting conditions for the entire planning area; therefore, site-specific analysis is generally necessary in order to further refine desired setting conditions that may apply to site-specific projects. Additional management direction related to recreation setting prescriptions is found under Guidelines, below. See the Glossary for ROS term definitions.

Desired Conditions

2.14.2 Established road and trail travel corridors offer high-quality scenery. Developed recreation facilities (including trailheads) provide relatively easy access for visitors, enabling them to enjoy a wide range of recreation experiences.

2.14.4 Recreation management is guided by recreation setting prescriptions established by the ROS maps, as well as by other resource goals and objectives. Although recreation opportunities are extensive throughout the planning area, there may be some areas where no recreation is appropriate.

2.14.5 Recreation tourism provides economic and social benefits to local communities and to the region; this is consistent with sustainable land practices, the protection of sense of place, and the market demand for SJNF and TRFO-related values.

2.14.6 Public access to SJNF and TRFO lands near communities provide a day-to-day lifestyle connection with the foothills, canyons, and mountains. Neighborhood trailheads and convenient access points provide quick entry to a natural setting. These lands are a community asset and help contribute to a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages.

2.14.7 The SJNF and TRFO offer motorized and non-motorized recreation experiences in large, predominantly naturally appearing landscapes, where active management may occur. Primitive dispersed camping sites, developed campgrounds, and trailheads are present in order to support dispersed recreation use.

2.14.8 Overground and oversnow motorized travel maps serve as guidelines for determining recreation travel within the planning area.

2.14.13 Projects and activities are consistent with the established ROS settings.

2.14.14 Much of the planning area has an ROS setting of semi-primitive and roaded natural.

2.14.15 A network of roads maintained for low-clearance passenger vehicles provides access through roaded natural ROS settings and provide access to extensive semi-primitive ROS settings. Beyond these well-traveled road corridors, contact frequency between visitors is less, secondary roads are more rugged and challenging with numerous 4 × 4 routes, visitor facilities are rare, and the sights and sounds of nature predominate.

2.14.17 Primitive ROS and semi-primitive ROS areas provide a variety of recreational opportunities, including:

- High-quality, resource-dependent recreation accessible from major travel corridors;
- Single- and multi-day challenging recreation activities and adventures;
- Non-motorized and motorized scenic backcountry experiences; and
- Self-discovery and challenge in areas with pristine natural conditions and solitude.

2.14.18 Roaded natural ROS areas provide a variety of recreational settings and activities, including:

- Motorized activities such as driving for pleasure and OHV use on designated trails and areas;
- A moderate to high degree of interaction and encounters with other users; and
- Sights and sounds of human development are evident but do not dominate users' experiences.

2.14.19 New trail construction in primitive and semi-primitive ROS settings protect resources, enhance recreation experience/challenge, mitigate user conflicts, and/or provide loops and/or links to other trail networks.

2.14.20 Dispersed recreation is an important opportunity offered throughout the planning area and occurs extensively. Facilities for dispersed recreation are minimal and are provided in order to protect resources and enhance recreation experiences (and are compatible with established ROS

settings, opportunities, and benefits). Access and parking, regulations, orientation, and safety information are provided only to the degree needed to protect resources and appropriately manage existing or anticipated uses.

2.14.21 Commercial outfitting/guiding is often provided within dispersed recreation areas in order to provide the expertise and equipment necessary for visitor safety, resource protection, and quality recreation experiences.

2.14.22 Dispersed camping opportunities are available for a wide variety of users. Motorized access to dispersed camping opportunities is addressed through travel management planning. Any new dispersed campsites are to be located outside riparian zones and other sensitive resource areas. Campsites may be closed, repaired, rehabilitated, and/or hardened when unacceptable environmental or social impacts occur. Dispersed recreation resulting in resource impacts or user conflicts is effectively addressed.

2.14.23 Dispersed camping does not interfere or conflict with the operation of developed campgrounds.

2.14.24 Effective parking and directional/information signing is in place in order to support sustainable dispersed recreation use.

2.14.25 Recreation is managed within the limits of ecosystem and species capacity for long term health and sustainability.

Objectives

2.14.59 Within 5 years, limit all motorized recreation travel to designated routes and/or in designated areas, with the potential exception on TRFO lands of small “open” areas managed in accordance with BLM Handbook 8342.

Guidelines

2.14.64 Summer and winter ROS maps should guide project-specific decisions and implementation activity. These maps define broad physical, social, and administrative settings for the entire SJNF and TRFO. Site-specific analysis is necessary ensure desired setting conditions are applied at the project level.

2.15 Scenario and Visual Resource Management

Objectives

2.15.12b Class II Objective. The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

2.15.12c Class III Objective. The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Standards

2.15.13 On USFS lands, all resource management activities must be consistent with the established scenery objectives shown on Figure 2.15 unless a decision (with supporting rationale) is made to deviate from the management guidance in a site-specific NEPA decision.

Guidelines

2.15.18 Straight line-of-sight road construction should be avoided. Roads through wooded areas should be designed in order to follow a curvilinear path using natural topography. Road construction

across ridge tops should be avoided where it may cause a visual contrast in the landscape or where it may add skyline alterations that are visually obvious.

2.16 Heritage and Cultural Resources

Guidelines

2.16.22 Activities that could adversely affect sites eligible or potentially eligible for the NRHP should avoid these sites by a minimum of 300 feet, unless otherwise specified by the Authorized Officer, and/or unless other mitigating measures are developed. If a project is specified by the Authorized Officer to be within 100 feet of an eligible or unevaluated site, all ground-disturbing activity should be monitored by a qualified archaeologist.

2.18 Lands and Special Uses

Desired Conditions

2.18.6 Road use authorizations for roads that serve predominantly non-SJNF purposes are provided to local road jurisdictions (reserving public access, where appropriate).

Guidelines

2.18.19 NFS roads, where private use substantially dominates public use, should be conveyed to the appropriate local government jurisdiction.

Dolores Ranger District Geographic Area

Desired Conditions

3.2.1 Public lands continue to function as “working lands.” Collaborative forest health and rangeland management practices reduce wildfire hazards, contribute to the viability of private ranch lands, and sustain ecosystem services (including watershed health and wildlife habitat). The local economy benefits from, and contributes to, sustainable resource management, as well as the preservation of open space.

3.2.2 The Dolores River system remains a primary water source in order to meet domestic and agricultural needs while, at the same time, contributing a wide array of recreational, ecological, and aesthetic services. Collaborative efforts support watershed health, instream water quality, scenic assets, healthy native and sport fish populations, rafting and flat water boating opportunities, and flow and spill management below McPhee Dam in support of ecological, recreational, reservoir management, and water rights imperatives.

3.2.3 A variety of looped single- and two-track opportunities for motorized and mechanized recreation exist at a range of elevations, offering different levels of difficulty. Motorized and mechanized opportunities are balanced with opportunities for foot and horseback access to areas of relative quiet and solitude at a variety of elevations. Much of the primary access to these areas is shared, based on mutual courtesy and on a strong stewardship ethic that is primarily self-enforced and maintained by individuals and user groups.

Management Area 3 (MA 3): Natural Landscapes with Limited Management

Management Area Description

MA 3 lands are relatively unaltered places where natural ecological processes operate primarily free from human influences. Succession, fire, insects, disease, floods, and other natural processes and disturbance events predominantly shape the composition, structure, and landscape patterns of the vegetation. These areas contribute to ecosystem and species diversity and sustainability, serve as

habitat for fauna and flora, and offer wildlife corridors, reference areas, primitive and semi-primitive recreation opportunities, and places for people seeking natural scenery and solitude.

Most MA 3 areas emphasize non-motorized recreation opportunities, but motorized travel occurs in some areas on existing roads and motorized trails.

Allowable Uses

Motorized (summer): Restricted (motorized travel may occur in some MA 3 locations on designated routes)

Management Area 4 (MA4): High Use Recreation

Management Area Description

These areas are places with relatively high levels of recreation use that is managed in order to provide a wide variety of opportunities and experiences to a broad spectrum of visitors. They are associated with, and often provide, access to popular destinations, transportation corridors, scenic byways, scenic vistas, lakes, and streams. Developed recreation facilities that provide user comfort and resource protection are present.

These areas tend to be altered by human activities, but also include some more undeveloped places (including backcountry travel corridors). Visitors can expect to see a wide range of human activities and development (including roads, trails, interpretive sites, campgrounds, trailheads, fences, and day-use facilities). Both motorized and non-motorized activity is common.

Allowable Uses

Motorized Summer – Allowable

Management Area 5 (MA 5): Active Management

Management Area Description

In MA 5 areas, visitors can expect to see a wide range of human activities, development, and management investments (including roads, trails, fences, corrals, stock ponds, timber harvesting equipment, oil and gas wells, and livestock). Maintenance of past and current investments is anticipated to be continued for future management opportunities. Motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities are easily accessed by the relatively dense network of roads found on these lands. Hiking trails provide access for visitors (who can expect contact with others). Developed recreation facilities that provide user comfort and resource protection are present.

Allowable Uses

Motorized (summer): Allowable

National Recreation and Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails

Desired Conditions

3.11.1 Consistent with their designation, the significant scenic, historic, recreation and natural resources for each trail are identified, interpreted, and protected. The values for which these trails were established are retained.

Guidelines

3.11.11 Other resource activities should be designed in order to meet scenic quality objectives for these special designation trails (generally, a foreground and middle-ground of very high to high scenic integrity or VRM Class II).

Scenery on either side of the Calico NRT is not affected by this project.

3.7 Recommended Wilderness Areas

Introduction

The SJNF recommends the following areas for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System (see Figure 3.6):

- portions of the Hermosa CRA (50,850 acres);
- portions of the Lizard Head CRA (2,632 acres);

Rico Special Management Area

Desired Conditions

3.27.2 Trailheads and informational signage direct locals and visitors to the appropriate desired recreational experience.

3.27.4 Trails accessing SJNF-administered lands from within town boundaries emphasize non-motorized recreation modes in order to emphasize the community's quiet-use character.

3.27.6 Undeveloped areas and CRAs on SJNF-administered lands near and/or around Rico provide quality elk and other large game habitat and wildlife corridors. These areas also provide quality hunting and wildlife viewing, as well as pristine backcountry non-motorized recreational experiences.

3.27.7 Undeveloped and roadless areas on SJNF-administered lands near and/or around Rico continue to provide habitat for wildlife and contribute to the sustainable reintroduction of the Canada lynx.

3.27.11 The watersheds surrounding Rico are maintained and enhanced, with a focus on water quality improvement for perennial streams entering the Dolores River.

3.27.13 The Silver Creek watershed remains the municipal water source for the town of Rico until such time as additional and/or new water sources are developed. Rico's municipal water supply source is protected from development activities that would cause negative impacts, per the town's permitting process and in coordination with the SJNF.

Objectives

3.27.15 Within 5 years, develop a parking lot outside the town limits for the Burnett Trailhead in order to provide an adequate staging area for motorized recreational experiences, along with preserving the quiet of the community while, at the same time, providing motorized opportunities.

Allowable Uses

Motorized (summer): Restricted to motorized routes and trails designated within the Rico area