



1.6 Policy.

A. Congressional Direction and General Principles

3. Monitor Wilderness Character

Monitoring wilderness character, as outlined in Appendix C of this manual, is an ongoing responsibility of the agency. In addition to tracking progress on fulfilling the congressional mandate, monitoring changes in wilderness character will help the BLM understand how stewardship decisions influence trends in wilderness character, and will help the BLM prioritize stewardship actions. The following principles should be considered when monitoring:

- a. Baseline data for a consistent set of indicators of wilderness character (see Appendix C for details) will be gathered within the first two years after designation, unless the Washington, D.C., Office Assistant Director (WO 400) approves a substitute schedule.
- b. Though some data will be gathered annually, each wilderness will report values for all established indicators every five years.
- c. Specific data sources will be referenced in reports, so that departures from baseline conditions can be tracked over many years. Field Offices will maintain individual files for each wilderness in their jurisdictions, including inventory maps, data-gathering protocols, or other metadata sufficient for tracking trends.
- d. The monitoring described by the framework in Appendix C is likely to be only part of the monitoring plan needed for an individual unit of the National Wilderness Preservation System. For example, managers may need to monitor outfitter/guide permit compliance, or track water quality at popular campsites. Individual Wilderness Stewardship Plans may identify additional monitoring parameters specific to each wilderness area.