

# U.S. Forest Service Wilderness Planning Policy

Excerpts from FSM 2300

WO AMENDMENT 2300-2007-1  
EFFECTIVE DATE: 01/22/2007  
DURATION: This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

*FSM 2300 - RECREATION, WILDERNESS, AND RELATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT*  
**CHAPTER 2320 - WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT**

## **2322 - WILDERNESS PLANNING**

Wilderness management direction is prepared as a part of the forest planning process as required by 36 CFR Part 219 and FSM 1922. Planning is also done in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (FSM 1950 and FSH 1909.15). Implementation of the forest plan is accomplished through development of implementation schedules that include projects and activities designed to achieve and comply with the management standards and guidelines established for the designated wilderness.

### **2322.01 - Authority**

Authority to conduct wilderness management planning is found in the National Forest Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1600) and 36 CFR 219.

### **2322.02 - Objectives**

1. Ensure that wilderness resource is fully integrated into the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.
2. Ensure that other resources and activities within each wilderness are coordinated and in harmony with the wilderness resource.

### **2322.03 - Policy**

1. Management direction for each wilderness must be stated in the forest plan as management area prescriptions with associated standards and guidelines. Each wilderness is unique as established by law; therefore, each will be identified as a separate management area.
2. The wilderness component of the forest plan shall include, as a minimum, the following:
  - a. Management direction in accordance with 36 CFR 219 and 36 CFR 293.

- b. Display of the relationships and coordination between the wilderness resource and other resources and activities present in the wilderness, as well as activities outside of wilderness that affect the management of the wilderness. Resources and other elements to be addressed include: recreation (including visitor education), forest cover, forage, fish and wildlife, federally listed threatened or endangered flora or fauna, domestic livestock, soil and water (including weather modification), minerals, historical and cultural resources, fire, land ownership, insect and diseases, air quality, other agency use, the trail system (including trailheads), signing, communication, and research.
    - c. Monitoring requirements for determining whether prescriptions, standards, and guidelines are met.
  3. Individual wilderness management plans completed prior to the writing of the forest plan may be incorporated as an entity into the forest plan if they:
    - a. Have been prepared in accordance with the NEPA process (FSM 1950).
    - b. Are considered current and valid.
    - c. Are appropriately referenced to and discussed in the forest plan.
    - d. Provide at least the same level of direction and guidance as would be found in the completed forest plan.
  4. Management direction shall be consistent for each wilderness that occurs in more than one State, Region, or National Forest.
  5. In some instances, the law designating a specific wilderness requires preparation of a wilderness management plan. These specified plans are integrated into the forest plan when completed before the forest planning process. If a wilderness plan is required subsequent to adoption of the forest plan, the required plan should not duplicate information contained in the forest plan. It should tier from and ultimately be appended to the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

## **2322.04 - Responsibilities**

### **2322.04a - Chief**

The Chief designates a lead Region when a wilderness involves more than one Region.

### **2322.04b - Regional Forester**

The Regional Forester designates a lead Forest when a wilderness involves more than one Forest and approves wilderness management direction by approving the forest plan.

## 2322.04c - Forest Supervisor

The Forest Supervisor ensures that management of the wilderness resource is a part of the forest plan.

### 2322.1 - Wilderness Implementation Schedules

Implementation schedules should be prepared to ensure that direction and objectives established in the forest plan are met (FSM 1922.5). They include coordination of the work done on all resources and activities within each wilderness and are normally revised annually.

Implementation schedules contain:

1. Specific action needed to follow forest plan direction and accomplish forest plan objectives.
2. General prioritization of action items.
3. Unit or individual responsibilities.
4. Target dates for completion of the actions.

### 2322.2 - Revision of Management Direction

If wilderness management direction in the forest plan is found to be inadequate, the plan should be amended following the procedure outlined in 36 CFR 219.10(f) and FSM 1950. If lack of direction is identified, but change is not warranted during the planning period, the concern should be noted and dealt with in the next revision of the plan. Establishment of new wilderness management direction requires appropriate public involvement and conformance with both the National Forest Management Act and National Environmental Policy Act processes.

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*FSM 2300 - RECREATION, WILDERNESS, AND RELATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT*  
**CHAPTER 2310 - PLANNING AND DATA MANAGEMENT**

## 2311 – Resource Opportunities in Recreation Planning

Stratify and define outdoor recreation setting opportunities to:

1. Establish outdoor recreation strategies and supporting standards and guidelines.
2. Ensure the proper scale and design criteria of development as explained in FSM 2330 and FSM 2340.

3. Support tradeoff analysis of possible recreation opportunities and quality (36 CFR Part 219.21 and Part 219.26 and FSM 1922.12-15).
4. Monitor the quality of recreation outputs and effects in Forest plan implementation (36 CFR Part 219.11(d) as defined in each Forest plan).
5. Identify, analyze, and display recreational access and travel needs and opportunities.

### **2311.1 – Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)**

Use the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) system and the ROS Users Guide (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. ROS Users Guide. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service; 1982. 37p.) to delineate, define, and integrate outdoor recreation opportunities in land and resource management planning (FSM 1922.15, item 2). Recreation integration/coordination provides for integrated management prescriptions and associated standards to deal with the recreation resource. ROS defines six recreation opportunity classes that provide different settings for recreational use: primitive, semi-primitive nonmotorized, semi-primitive motorized, roaded natural, rural, and urban. Use ROS classes to describe all recreation opportunity areas--from natural, undisturbed, and undeveloped to heavily used, modified, and developed. Apply the criteria involving the physical, social, and managerial environments found in the ROS Users Guide to delineate the different ROS classes of land. Urban class areas are not normally an appropriate management objective for National Forest lands.

### **2311.11 – Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Visual and Access Guides**

Exhibit 1 presents visual quality guides for each ROS class. Exhibit 2 presents access strategies for each ROS class.

**EXHIBITS 1 AND 2 ARE A SEPARATE DOCUMENT**