



These are relevant sections about Wilderness Management Plans from National Park Service 2006 Management Policies, Director's Orders #41 and Reference Manual 41.

**National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
2006 Management Policies
Chapter 6: Wilderness Preservation and Management**

6.3.4.2 Wilderness Management Planning

The superintendent of each park containing wilderness resources will develop and maintain a wilderness management plan or equivalent planning document to guide the preservation, management, and use of these resources. The wilderness management plan will identify desired future conditions, as well as establish indicators, standards, conditions, and thresholds beyond which management actions will be taken to reduce human impacts on wilderness resources.

The park's wilderness management plan may be developed as a separate document or as an action component of another planning document. Whether prepared as a stand-alone plan or as part of another planning document, all wilderness management plans must meet the same standards for process and content as specified in this section 6.3.4. Wilderness management plans will be supported by appropriate documentation of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act. The plan will be developed with public involvement and will contain specific, measurable management objectives that address the preservation and management of natural and cultural resources within wilderness as appropriate to achieve the purposes of the Wilderness Act and other legislative requirements.

(See Visitor Carrying Capacity 8.2.1)

DIRECTOR'S ORDER #41: Wilderness Preservation and Management

B. INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

3. Management Responsibility and Accountability. Park managers will ensure that wilderness resources are afforded maximum protection through implementation of the following actions addressing the NPS wilderness accountability and responsibilities defined in Chapter 6 Wilderness Preservation and Management policies. (Reference Manual #41: Appendix C provides a checklist for these items)

b. Complete Wilderness Management Planning

(i) Wilderness Management Plan. Park superintendents with wilderness resources will prepare and implement a wilderness management plan or

equivalent integrated into an appropriate planning document (see Reference Manual #41: Appendix D). An environmental compliance document, in keeping with NEPA requirements, which provides the public with the opportunity to review and comment on the park's wilderness management program, will accompany the plan.

(ii) Wilderness Management Plan Coordination. The goals and objectives of the wilderness management plan will be effectively coordinated with other park management documents (e.g. General Management Plan, Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plan, and other operational plans such as the Fire Management Plan, and Natural and Cultural Resources Management Plan).

C. WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The following guidance is provided for dealing with major wilderness management issues confronting the National Park Service:

1. Wilderness Management Plan Requirements

The minimum content requirements for a wilderness management plan are as follows:

A wilderness management plan will be completed every ten years by all parks containing wilderness resources for the purpose of providing accountability, consistency, and continuity to the National Park Service's wilderness management program. The requirement to have a current wilderness management plan (or similar plan) applies to all areas containing suitable, study, proposed, recommended, and designated wilderness.

The wilderness management plan will: 1) clearly identify the boundaries of wilderness units of the park; 2) identify individuals and/or organizations within the park administration responsible for wilderness preservation; 3) establish an administrative process to determine "minimum requirement" for actions in wilderness; and 4) establish specific management actions to be applied to guide public use and preservation of wilderness resources, including the establishment of desired future conditions.

An environmental compliance document that provides the public with the opportunity to review and comment on the park's wilderness management program will accompany all wilderness management plans, consistent with the requirements of NEPA and appropriate National Park Service policy guidance. Because of the unique nature of wilderness resources and possible public controversy over use allocations and their effects, in some instances a full environmental impact statement will be required.

Wilderness management plans must be coordinated and integrated with other park planning documents (General Management Plan, the park's Strategic

Plan/Annual Performance Plan, Facility Management Plans, Fire Management Plan, etc.) to ensure consistency across park management programs. All park disciplines should participate in the planning process.

While parks may exercise considerable flexibility as to the organizational and physical format of the wilderness management plan (i.e., plans may be developed as separate documents or integrated into General Management Plans, Backcountry Management Plans, or Resource Management Plans), the plan must contain at least the topics identified in the “Wilderness Management Plan-Recommended Content” included in Reference Manual #41: Appendix D.

REFERENCE MANUAL #41: Wilderness Preservation and Management

APPENDIX D WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PLAN—RECOMMENDED CONTENT

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Goals and Objectives of the Plan. Provide an introductory statement which establishes the purpose and goals of the plan.

B. Identification of the Wilderness Area. The park should provide a map (preferably using the GIS format), and text as needed, which clearly illustrates exactly where the park and wilderness boundaries are located. In order to provide maximum protection to wilderness resources, boundary maps should be as detailed as possible.

C. Legislation and Pre-Existing Conditions Affecting Wilderness Management. Identify any legislative constraints and/or conditions which affects the management of the wilderness unit. This should also include the identification of any valid existing rights (patented or unpatented mining claims, treaty rights, access, water rights, legislated grazing, rights-of-way, etc.) that predate wilderness.

D. Relationship of Wilderness Plan with Other Management Plans, Directives, and Initiatives. Explain how the wilderness plan relates to other pertinent management plans, initiatives, and directives, including the parks Government Performance and Results Act [GPRA] Strategic Plan.

I. WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PROPOSED GOALS AND ACTIONS

A. Inventory of Administrative Facilities.

1. Trails
2. Camp Areas

3. Administrative Facilities: Identify and justify the current administrative facilities (toilets, buildings, repeater sites, radio towers, weather stations, research installations, etc.) which will be maintained or allowed within the wilderness and the standards/conditions at which these facilities are maintained. The justification should clearly explain why the specific administrative facility or installation is needed and/or authorized within wilderness and why these facilities are needed "for the purpose of the Wilderness Act." This section should also describe the procedures and protocols, including cultural resource management requirements, which will be used to operate and maintain these facilities, i.e., use of specialized equipment to maintain facilities, aircraft use. Also identify those facilities which are incompatible and explain how these will be removed. Inventory lists can be included as an appendix.

- B. Establish Desired Future Conditions: This section of the plan should describe the future conditions which should be achieved within wilderness as a result of your management actions. These conditions should be described in terms of measurable factors such as, but not limited to: physical or biological conditions (wildlife, air and water quality), cultural resource values, natural processes (re-establishment of fire regimes), visitor wilderness experiences, and levels of protection of natural and cultural resources. It is advisable to establish these conditions through public participation.

Parks may apply accepted methodologies (Limits of Acceptable Change [LAC], or Visitor Experience and Resource Protection [VERP], or use reliable historic and/or anecdotal resource monitoring data to establish the indicators and standards needed to quantify these numbers. Regardless, the public must be provided with an opportunity to participate in the establishment of the desired future conditions for the wilderness, either through full involvement in an LAC or VERP process, or through formal review of the draft wilderness management plan. (See Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station General Technical Report INT-176 for a full explanation of the nine-step LAC process, the LAC discussion in Wilderness Management by Hendee, Stankey, and Lucas (1990), and the Wilderness Planning handbook developed by the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center.

- C. Establish Monitoring Indicators. "Monitoring indicators" are the measurable variables used to evaluate the whether or not desired future conditions are actually being achieved. The changes to these indicators are caused by human activity and, accordingly, should be reflected by your management actions. Examples of measurable indicators include: number of occupied camps within sight and sound of each other, trailhead and trail social encounters, number of campsites per drainage, vegetation impacts in campgrounds, indications of human waste, social trailing, frequency of natural fires, recovery and/or protection of sensitive resources etc.
- D. Establish Standards for Indicators. Standards may be quantitative or qualitative. Condition-type standards describe acceptable resource and experience conditions in measurable terms that are considered realistic and attainable so it is clear when

corrective management action is needed. Management-type standards describe the requirements that limit managers' discretion on how the desired condition might be achieved (procedures and actions that must be adhered to which are not already covered by national or regional policy directives).

Standards should: promote conditions that meet the intent of the Wilderness Act and specific management goals, meet agency policy and regulations, meet desired future conditions, be attainable, allow or a certain amount of deviation, achieve what citizens, managers, and scientists consider acceptable, and be capable of being analyzed successfully. This section should include the establishment of the threshold standards at which management action will be triggered, and the methods that these indicators will actually be monitored.

- E. Establish Visitor Use Levels. Provide a description of the amount and types of human uses which will be permitted within the wilderness using the above desired future conditions, indicators, and standards, i.e., camping, group size limits, trail use limits (if any), day use limits (if any), etc.
 - 1. Trail and Crosscountry Use Capacities
 - 2. Establish Social\Experience Levels
 - 3. Camp Area Use
 - 4. Permits and Reservation System
 - 5. Sanitation Issues
- F. Staff Organization and Accountability. Identify key members of the park staff who are directly responsible and accountable for the parks wilderness management program. The plan should also include a statement as to when the plan should be reviewed for renewal and/or updating.
- G. Application of "Minimum Requirement" Concept. Establish a procedure for determining the method by which the park's administrative actions will be conducted in wilderness. Describe the process the park intends to use to determine the "minimum requirement" for administrative activities normally prohibited within wilderness. Include an explanation as to how the decision process will be documented.
- H. Access by Persons with Disabilities. As appropriate, describe how the park plans to make the area accessible to persons with disabilities.
- I. Stock Use. Determine whether or not saddle and pack stock use will be permitted and identify the specific limitations of this use within wilderness. Describe how this use is coordinated with the park's stock use management plan. Include any special conditions or regulations that would affect legislatively permitted livestock grazing with the park's designated wilderness. The use of livestock in wilderness must reconcile the goals of the wilderness management plan and the park's other stock management directives. Accordingly, the parks will be responsible for applying

policies applicable to both when developing and implementing their respective management programs.

- J. Fire Management. (See Section IV.C.5)
- K. Cultural Resources. Describe how cultural resources will be inventoried, preserved and protected in keeping with approved natural and cultural resource management plans. See Section IV.C.4 (Cultural Resources) of this reference manual.
- L. Climbing and Mountaineering. Describe how these activities, if present, will be managed.
- M. Interpretation and Education. Add statements describing how this will be managed. (See Section IV.C.6 and Appendix I of this reference manual.)
- N. Management of Valid Existing Rights and Congressionally Authorized Uses. Describe how these rights are to be administered to provide protection to wilderness.
- O. Interaction with Other Federal Land Management Agencies. Provide an explanation of how the park manager will coordinate, as much as possible, with adjoining wilderness units so that visitors traveling from one wilderness to the other can do so with a minimum of bureaucratic impediments. Examples include the issuance of permits, similar riding and packstock use programs, similar group and party sizes, and similar policy on the use of fire by visitors.
- P. Scientific Activities. Describe how the park will administer scientific activities (including NPS research and scientific activities) to ensure that this activity applies the minimum requirement protocols when assessing the benefits and impacts of the research to wilderness.
- Q. Additional Items as Needed. Address how other specific management issues including but not limited to alien species, signs, campfires, pets, grazing, caves, threatened and endangered species, will be managed in wilderness.

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