

DESIRED CONDITIONS & STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

HIGH UINTAS WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Desired Conditions

Wilderness-Wide

The High Uintas Wilderness is recognized as an important component of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Air quality meets Federal and State standards. There are no measurable disturbances to water chemistry or biotic components due to acid deposition. There is no measurable degradation in water quality. Stream and river channels are naturally appearing and maintained by natural flows. The ability of soils to support naturally occurring vegetation is not significantly impaired by human activities.

Plant communities, including riparian communities, are affected by natural processes and maintain their natural appearance. Bare soil conditions may occur. Viable populations of indigenous plants are sustained, particularly threatened, endangered, and sensitive (TES) species. The mosaic of plant communities contributes to overall biodiversity. Fire is one of the primary ecological processes serving an integral role in the maintenance of the wilderness ecosystem. The wilderness ecosystem is allowed to be highly dynamic, evolving over time. Smoke is a product of natural fire and is seen in the wilderness and in adjacent areas.

Wildlife and fish are recognized as an integral part of the wilderness and contribute significantly to overall biodiversity. Natural processes and the forces of natural selection determine the diversity of wildlife and fish habitat and species. Wildlife transplants are limited to indigenous species and considered only when a vacant niche has been identified. Where potential exists for a transplant species to migrate into adjacent management areas, the impacts are considered in the environmental analysis. Indigenous species classified as sensitive are reestablished. The wilderness serves to maintain indigenous species presently existing in the area. In order to define standards for some wildlife and fisheries desired conditions, such as for neotropical bird populations, rates of stream bank erosion, and acres of habitat available to potential TES resident species, baseline data is collected.

Cultural and historic sites are recognized as integral components of the wilderness resource. Past human uses of the landscape are understood. Values of cultural resource sites are preserved.

Livestock grazing under commercial permit is recognized as an appropriate use of wilderness. The results of livestock grazing are consistent with desired condition of water, soils, wildlife, and vegetation.

There are opportunities for public use, enjoyment, and understanding of the wilderness through wilderness-dependent activities. Outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation exist. An appropriate mix of outfitter-guides assist the Forest Service in managing and protecting the wilderness resource and providing for the well-being of visitors.

Visitors find clean water and air and indigenous plant and animal species. Visitors may encounter signs of fire, including smoke, and they are aware of the natural role of fire in the wilderness. Smoke from fire may impair visibility. Historic and prehistoric cultural resources may be discovered. Visitors may encounter administrative personnel. Trails provide recreation access while protecting wilderness values. The results of recreation, including hunting, fishing, and outfitter-guiding, are consistent with desired conditions for soils, water, vegetation, wildlife, and the social setting.

Established permitted irrigation impoundments and essential hydro-meteorological measuring devices are appropriate uses of the wilderness. They are maintained and monitored using minimum tool concepts. As opportunities arise, water use and prediction functions are relocated outside the wilderness. Decommissioned reservoirs are stabilized and rehabilitated at levels that more naturally reflect pre-construction conditions, allow natural stream flows to re-establish, pose no hazard, require no maintenance or inspection, and require no permit.

Wilderness dependent research is appropriate and encouraged. Scientific values of the wilderness are recognized and preserved.

Condition Class I Areas

The area is characterized by an unmodified natural environment. Human induced change is temporary, minor, and less than in Class II and III. Soil compaction and minor vegetation loss associated with human related activities are temporary, discontinuous, and limited in extent to the area of activity. Human induced changes to soils, water and air quality, wildlife habitats, natural fire regimes, and vegetation do not disrupt natural processes within the watershed.

By managing the area to maintain very low use levels, outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined recreation are available. There are few, if any, system trails. Appropriate and properly designed system trails that pass through Class I are considered corridors and are maintained. Encounters with other groups and rangers are rare. Both the outfitted and general public disperse use and practice Leave No Trace ethics and skills. Regulations are communicated to visitors primarily outside the wilderness. Few direct contacts by wilderness rangers are made, unless needed to monitor conditions or address problems. Generally, Class I areas are defined outside permitted livestock allotments, except areas within allotment boundaries that are unsuitable, vacant, or unused (due to physical barriers or quality of forage). Lakes are generally not stocked with fish.

Condition Class II Areas

The area is characterized by a predominantly unmodified natural environment. Some human induced change is evident but generally not persistent and less than in Class III. Soil loss, compaction, and minor vegetation loss associated with human activities are discontinuous and limited in extent to the area of activity. Human induced changes to soils, water and air quality, wildlife habitats, natural fire regimes, and vegetation do not disrupt natural processes within the watershed.

Outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation exist. Compared to Class III, fewer areas of concentrated visitor use occur. In areas of concentrated human use, dead and down firewood is available but may be scarce. Developed, maintained, and signed system trails exist. Encounters with other groups, rangers, and wilderness ranger camps are less than Class III but more than Class I. Both the outfitted and general public practice Leave No Trace ethics and skills. Where regulation is needed to prevent deterioration of the wilderness resource and visitor experience, it is communicated to visitors primarily outside the wilderness and on-site. Livestock grazing and fish stocking may occur.

Condition Class III Areas

This area is characterized by a predominantly unmodified natural environment. Human induced change is greater than in Class I and II and could persist from year to year. Soil loss, compaction, and minor vegetation loss associated with human activities are discontinuous and limited in extent to the area of activity. Human induced changes to soils, water and air quality, wildlife habitats, natural fire regimes, and vegetation do not disrupt natural processes within the watershed.

Concentrated use is more common than in Class II, but it is managed to augment opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. During peak season and at popular sites, outstanding opportunities for solitude are more limited than in Class I and II. In popular campsites, dead and down firewood may be unavailable.

Well-maintained and signed system trails aid visitors. Encounters with other groups, rangers, and wilderness ranger camps are more common than in Class I and II. Both the outfitted and general public practice Leave No Trace ethics and skills. Where regulation is needed to prevent deterioration of the wilderness resource and visitor experience, it is communicated to visitors both outside of the wilderness and on-site. Livestock grazing and fish stocking may occur.

Visitors may come in contact with water impoundments or snow measurement devices. Repair, reconstruction, or stabilization of water impoundments and associated activities (borrow sources, access roads) are performed so the ability of soils to support naturally occurring vegetation is not diminished.

Standards & Guidelines

Air Quality

- MA-01-001 (S) All Classes: Nitrate loading will not exceed 3-5 kg/hectare/yr. Sulphate loading will not exceed 3-5 kg/hectare/yr.
- MA-01-002 (S) All Classes: Long-term visibility impairment from human activities will not impair long-term baseline visual range more than 10% of the 90th percentile in Class II Wilderness Airsheds. Short-term (14-day) visual range impairment from human activities outside the wilderness will not reduce visual range more than 20% in Class II Wilderness Airsheds.
- MA-01-003 (S) All Classes: Alkalinity will not be reduced more than 10% of the baseline in all surface waters.

Water and Soil Management

- MA-01-004 (S) All Classes: State of Utah water quality standards will be met for acceptable amounts of coliform bacteria in waters for their specific beneficial uses as defined by the *State Standards of Quality of the Waters of the State*.
- MA-01-005 (S) Class I: No more than 15% of all use areas have Erosion Class I characteristics, 0% have Erosion Class II and III characteristics.
- MA-01-006 (S) Class II: No more than 25% of all use areas have Erosion Class I characteristics, no more than 15% have Erosion Class II characteristics, 0% have Erosion Class III characteristics.
- MA-01-007 (S) Class III: No more than 50% of all use areas have Erosion Class I characteristics, no more than 25% have Erosion Class II characteristics, 0% have Erosion Class III characteristics.

Vegetation Management

- MA-01-016 (S) Permit no more than 10% of the habitat for sensitive plant species to be adversely altered by human uses.
- MA-01-017 (S) Alpine Vegetation Types: 85% of potential ground cover. Aspen Vegetation Types: 85% of potential ground cover. Riparian Vegetation Types: 85% of potential ground cover.

Fire Management

MA-01-018 (S) All Classes: Prescribed (lightning caused) and management ignited natural fires are managed so fire can play, as nearly as possible, its natural role in the ecosystem. Prescribed fires are managed using the fire plan found in the HUW FEIS, 1997 (FSM 2324.2).

Recreation Use

MA-01-035 (S) Campsite Density. Class I: Campsites should be at least one mile apart. Class II: Campsites should be at least 1/4 mile apart. Class III: Campsites should be at least 200 feet apart.

MA-01-036 (S) Campsite Condition. Class I: No campsites have an SII rating greater than 40. Class II: 10% or fewer campsites have an SII rating greater than 40. Class III: 20% or fewer campsites have an SII rating greater than or equal to 50.

MA-01-037 (S) Terrain permitting, campsites must be at least 200 feet from water.

MA-01-038 (S) Group Size. Class I: Seven people and seven stock. Class II and III: 14 people and 15 stock.

MA-01-039 (S) Length of Stay. Class I: One or two nights recommended stay. Class II and III: 14 nights at an individual site.

MA-01-040 (G) All Classes: Stock may be tethered to a tree for two hours, less if damage is occurring to the tree or vegetation at the base of the tree.

MA-01-041 (G) All Classes: Stock cannot be tethered within 200 feet of water sources for more than two hours.

MA-01-042 (S) No overnight use or grazing by recreational stock in Chain Lakes Basin (Uinta River drainage).

MA-01-043 (G) Litter or waste will be disposed of in an appropriate manner.

MA-01-045 (S) Naturalist Basin (Duchesne River drainage): Building, maintaining, attending, or using a fire or campfire unless in a designated campfire location is prohibited.

Outfitted Recreation Use

MA-01-048 (S) Class I: Drop camps only, no spike or assigned camps. Overnight group size limited to seven people and seven head of stock. Class II: One

assigned site per drainage. Class III: Drop camps only, no spike or assigned camps.

MA-01-049 (S) Based on an outfitting needs analysis for the HUW, permit no more than seven special-use stock outfitters and no more than four special-use non-stock outfitters.

MA-01-050 (S) Maximum available client days for outfitted use by drainage are:

RIVER DRAINAGE	STOCK	NON-STOCK
Duchesne River	0	0
Rock Creek	300	200
Lake Fork River	350	600
Yellowstone Creek	300	550
Uinta River	300	450
Burnt Fork	150	0
Beaver Creek	150	0
Henrys Fork	0	150
Smiths Fork	0	300
E/M/W Blacks Fork	250	300
E/Stillwater Fork	50	0
TOTAL CLIENT DAYS	1850	2250

MA-01-052 (G) Administer and issue outfitter-guide permits to meet the following needs criteria:

Criteria A. Ability to accomplish environmental education, interpretation, and land stewardship education goals.

Criteria B. Ability to accomplish resource protection and other National Forest goals (ie: trail maintenance, construction, and rehabilitation and campsite rehabilitation and relocation).

Criteria C. Client days used compared to service days authorized. This may reflect either an increase or decrease in authorized client days, but it cannot exceed the client day ceiling for the wilderness.

Criteria D. Documented citizen requests over time for particular commercial services.

Criteria E. Ability of the agency to monitor existing permits for compliance with the Forest Plan and special-use permit requirements.

Criteria F. Lakes and trail corridors in Duchesne River, Henry's Fork, Smith Fork, and East and Stillwater Forks of the Bear River drainages are **least** appropriate for outfitting operations because current public use meets or exceeds desired conditions for these areas.

Criteria G. Outfitter knowledge of the area, safety, equipment, and the quality of business and customer service.

Structures and Improvements

MA-01-055 (S) Class I: No system trails. Class II and III: Trails avoid wetlands. Trails avoid stream crossings where bank gradients are greater than 30%. Trails are designed, constructed, and maintained such that water does not run down them.

MA-01-056 (S) Class II and III: Trail switchbacks do not show signs of shortcutting.