**[Forest/District/Unit] Wilderness Education Plan**

**Description of Supporting Materials**

S1. Wilderness Area Information Table p. X

* Includes a table with basic information (e.g., name, size, counties, lead district and districts that share management responsibilities) about all Wilderness areas covered by the plan.

S2. Description of Issue Categories p. X

* Includes a table with a general description of issues that fall into each issue category that are listed in the “Summary of Identified Management Issues” table.

S3. Activity Plan Template p. X

* + Includes a template for an education activity/lesson plan to be used for the design of education activities that require more planning steps.

S4. Guidance on Monitoring and Evaluation p. X

* + Includes additional suggestions on how and where to document education work, methods for assessing effectiveness of activities and an Evaluation Response Diagram to help district staff determine if education activities should be continued in subsequent years.

S5. Education Resources and Support p. X

* + Includes a list of useful education resources and reference materials available to the districts for guidance on planning and implementing activities, which includes Wilderness-related education materials, Forest Service resources, grant funding, etc.

S6. District Wilderness Information Sheet p. X

* + Includes documentation gathered per district with specific information unique to each Wilderness area and summarizes priority issues, current education activities, who provided input on the plan and ideas for future activities.

**S1. Wilderness Information Table**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Wilderness Area** | **Acreage**  **(Total and By State)** | **Counties** | **Lead District** | **Affiliated District(s)** |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**S2. Description of Issue Categories**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Issue Category** | **Issues** | **Description** |
| ***General Wilderness Awareness*** | Internal and External Awareness | Lack of general awareness of the concept of Wilderness – what it is, why public land is designated as such, its inherent character and values, the need to steward it differently from other public lands |
| ***Regulations and Illegal Uses*** | Mechanized and Motorized Equipment | Illegal use of mechanized and motorized equipment (e.g., mountain bikes, ATVs, chainsaws, drones) |
| Boundary Signage/Kiosks | Lack of boundary signage/kiosks with information to inform visitors of entrance into and regulations of Wilderness area |
| Encroachment | Encroachment of people into Wilderness areas for various illegal reasons (e.g., firewood gathering, squatting) |
| ***Visitor-Use Impacts*** | Unprepared Visitors | Includes lack of proper safety awareness and backcountry practices, which includes human waste disposal and litter, illegal and multiple campfire rings, illegal and multiple campsites, vegetation cutting and tree damage at campsites |
| User-Group Impacts | Includes user-group conflicts, user-created trails, specific user-group Impacts (e.g., hunting/fishing, pack/saddle use, rock climbers), improper group size and lack of group permits |
| Other Impacts to Solitude | Includes impacts to solitude from high volume of use especially at scenic destinations, noise levels and uncontrolled dogs |
| ***Natural Resources Management*** | Wildlife Management | Issues related to visitor-use impacts on wildlife and need to educate on topics related to bear safety/proper food storage (e.g., canisters), threatened/endangered species, aquatic habitat management (e.g., leaving habitat undisturbed by not moving rocks or woody debris), pest and disease management, including any unique features/benefits |
| Invasive Species | Includes need to educate on safety issues related to dead trees from invasive species (e.g., hemlock woolly adelgid), need for use of weed-free seed and visitor-use impacts that create disturbance and proliferation of invasive plant species |
| Water and Air Quality | Issues related to visitor-use impacts on water/air quality and need to educate on related topics (e.g., sediment deposition in streams from illegal vehicle use) or other unique features/benefits |

**S3. Activity Plan Template**

What is the overall goal of the activity (i.e., broad statement that describes what the activity will accomplish)?

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| --- |
|  |

What are the learning objectives (i.e., specific, quantifiable statements of how to achieve the overall goal)?

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Who is/are the target audience(s)?

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| --- |
|  |

Are there any political considerations or other on-the-ground realities that need to be taken into consideration?

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What are the key messages/takeaways to communicate to the audience?

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What is the desired outcome (i.e., change in knowledge/skills/behavior)?

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| --- |
|  |

What are the necessary resources (e.g., materials, staff, time)?

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|  |

How will you advertise the event to the target audience (e.g., newspaper press release, social media, fliers)?

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What is the timeline to prepare and conduct the activity?

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|  |

Describe in detail the prep work required for this activity:

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| --- |
|  |

Provide a step-by-step procedure for conducting the activity:

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| --- |
|  |

List questions or activities (e.g., journaling, small group sessions) that you will use to engage the audience:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Describe in detail how you will evaluate (e.g., pre/post-surveys, level of engagement, number of people) whether the desired outcome has been met:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**S4. Guidance on Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring

The primary route for documenting education activities is use of the Annual Review Template (see Excel file attachment). This template includes fields to document a description of the work conducted, when and by whom and notes on overall effectiveness of the activity.

Another documentation system for education programming is the **NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education (NICE) database**. It is a good resource to search for examples of successful education programs and to obtain contact information for collaborating or sharing educational materials. Partners can also request access to this system. Please note that any education program funded by the “Every Kid in a Park” initiative must be reported on in the NICE database. Links to information about this system are located in S5.

Additionally districts are highly encouraged to share resources across districts, the Forest and the Region. Documentation and electronic copies of education activities and training materials (e.g., brochures, lesson plans, training handouts) can be sent to both the Forest-level and Region 8 Wilderness Program Manager for archiving on SharePoint (or other websites). The link to the Region 8 SharePoint site where materials will be stored is included in S5. This site will be a clearinghouse of education materials and ideas available for district staff to access and adapt for their own Wilderness education needs.

Additionally, partners who participate in or conduct education activities will need to report on and evaluate their efforts, so this work can be captured in the annual review process. Suggestions for documentation include: provide partners will a spreadsheet similar to the annual review that they can keep updated; add education activities as an option on any report form already required from partners; and/or record activities during an annual partner meeting.

Evaluation

Evaluation will primarily focus on anecdotal observations to assess how the activity went. Examples of techniques for evaluation include: pre/post-surveys to test participant knowledge/skills/behavior before and after an event; informal observations of how engaged people were in the activity; the number of participants and demographics; and simple reflection on the activity by asking questions, such as “How did the activity go?” and “Did it seem effective?”

However, districts are encouraged to use more objective evaluation techniques if data are available to them. For example, if activities can be tied to a specific, quantifiable measurement (e.g., lbs of trash collected each year from a specific area) then monitoring for that condition over time can provide insight into whether activities targeted toward visitors (e.g., Wilderness Leave No Trace workshop at local campground) have an impact on the desired outcomes (e.g., reduce amount of trash left by visitors).

Upon annual review of education efforts throughout the year, each activity should be quickly assessed to determine if efforts should be continued, increased or modified in the next FY action plan. This information can be recorded in the Annual Review Template. The following Evaluation Response Diagram provides a quick outline of this evaluation process.

**Evaluation Response Diagram**

No

Reflect on the effectiveness of each activity: Did the activity seem effective in accomplishing the desired outcome?

Yes

Does this activity need to be repeated?

No

Yes

Is there a way to improve the activity?

Discontinue the activity. Choose another activity for goal/objective and add into next year’s action plan.

Modify the activity accordingly. Include revised activity in next year’s action plan.

Include activity in next year’s action plan. Consider increasing the frequency.

No

Yes

During the annual review process, document education activities conducted during FY by Forest Service and partners

**S5. Wilderness Education Resources**

**External Wilderness Resources**

**RecLink**: a community of practice for recreation professionals that includes discussion forums and resources on various recreation aspects that includes Wilderness information

<http://www.reclink.us/>

**Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center**/**Wilderness.net**: includes a comprehensive collection of Wilderness education and training materials and opportunities; also can sign up for Wilderness Connect to access discussion boards

<http://wilderness.net/>

**Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute**: includes information relevant for Wilderness managers with research on visitor trends, recreation impacts and other stewardship challenges

<http://leopold.wilderness.net/>

**Authority of the Resource (ART)**: technique developed by George Wallace for visitor education to encourage desirable behavior by explaining why the behavior is needed from the perspective of the resource (e.g., Wilderness)

<https://www-static.bouldercolorado.gov/docs/authority-of-the-resource-article-1-201305221020.pdf>

**Leave No Trace**: includes information on LNT training, resources and materials, plus a free online LNT awareness module; the Region 8 LNT coordinator also has access to additional resources, such as materials and training funds

<https://lnt.org/>

**Internal FS Wilderness Resources**

**RecTalk** (email listserv): internal FS email listserv to ask questions related to recreation including wilderness; must subscribe to the email list

**Region 8 Conservation Education** **Updates** (email listserv): send email to [KellyBalcarczyk@fs.fed.us](mailto:KellyBalcarczyk@fs.fed.us) to sign up for updates on programs and funding opportunities

**Volunteer and Services Biweekly Update** (email listserv): send email to [drlederle@fs.fed.us](mailto:drlederle@fs.fed.us) with subject line “Request to join VolServ ListServ”

**O-Drive** (file sharing/storage system): can review materials across the USFS that are stored on this server; can look for example education and outreach materials stored in folders numbered 2300 (rec) and 2320 (wilderness)

**NRM/Infra-Wild**: houses databases related to annual reporting and training resources (e.g., protocols, user guides); location of where to document WSP elements; can run reports on WSP activity across units

**Region 8 Information Board Templates**: a collection of information board templates, including LNT and safety, for use across the region

<http://fsweb.r8.fs.fed.us/information_boards.shtml>

**Region 8 Wilderness intranet site**: includes links to WSP info, contacts like traditional tools coordinator, wilderness management direction, SWAG newsletters, etc.

<http://fsweb.r8.fs.fed.us/nr/recreation/wilderness/index.php>

**WSP SharePoint site**: site includes information on WSP timeline, library of materials like protocols, annual WSP reports and other templates

<https://ems-team.usda.gov/sites/fs-nfs-wsm/_layouts/15/start.aspx>

**Missoula Technology and Development Cent**er: provides publications, training and educational materials on Leave No Trace, Wilderness ranger training, etc.; view pubs list for materials that are available

<http://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/>

**FS National Collaboration Cadre**: provides assistance to plan projects collaboratively, including ways to improve stewardship efforts in regions

<http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nfma/collaborative_processes/default.htm>

**NICE (NatureWatch, Interpretation and Conservation Education Database)**: the Forest Service database of record for reporting outreach and education activities and sharing accomplishments with partners and leadership; can review entries for ideas on activities; required reporting for any district receiving Every Kid in a Park funding

<https://apps.fs.usda.gov/nice>

**Kid Connections:** FS internal SharePoint site for youth programming

<https://ems-team.usda.gov/sites/fs-kid-connections/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/_layouts/15/viewlsts.aspx?ShowSites=1>

**Region 8 Wilderness Education Materials**: internal SharePoint site to share education and outreach materials across the region; submit materials to the Region 8 Wilderness Program Manager for addition to the site

<https://ems-team.usda.gov/sites/fs-r08-rwhv/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/SitePages/Wilderness%20-%20W%20and%20S%20Rivers.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fsites%2Ffs%2Dr08%2Drwhv%2FWWSRivers%2FWilderness%20Stewardship%20Performance&FolderCTID=0x012000A5B5CCF19F0F2B44B270A3DEC5B1FBE9&View=%7B8E9C6F89%2D2902%2D4CF6%2DB56F%2D2FD38181E675%7D>

**Conservation Education Programs and Training**

**Forest Service Nature Watch**

<http://www.fs.fed.us/naturewatch/>

**Discover the Forest**

<http://www.discovertheforest.org/>

**Nature Alive**

<https://fsnaturelive.org/>

**National Inquirer**

<http://www.naturalinquirer.org/>

**Science NetLinks**

<http://sciencenetlinks.com/>

**Project Learning Tree**

<https://www.plt.org/>

**Project WET**

<http://www.projectwet.org/>

**Project WILD**

<http://www.projectwild.org/>

**National Association for Interpretation**

<http://www.interpnet.com/>

**FWS National Conservation Training Center**

<https://nctc.fws.gov/topic/online-training/webinars/index.html>

**North American Association for Environmental Educators**

<https://naaee.org/>

**Southeast Environmental Educators**

<http://southeastee.org/>

**State Environmental Literacy Programs**

<http://www.cbf.org/ncli/action/environmental-literacy-plans-by-state>

**Outdoor Diversity Initiatives**

**Every Kid in a Park**

<https://everykidinapark.gov/>

**Outdoor Nation**

<http://outdoornation.org/>

**NPS The Urban Agenda**

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/urban/index.htm>

**Urban Connections (Region 9 program)**

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r9/workingtogether>

**Outdoor Afro**

<http://www.outdoorafro.com/>

**HECHO: Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting, and the Outdoors**

<http://www.hechoonline.org/>

**Latino Outdoors**

<http://latinooutdoors.org/>

**Next 100 Coalition**

<http://next100coalition.org/>

**Greening Youth Foundation**

<https://www.gyfoundation.org/>

**Outdoor Explorers Mentoring Program**

<http://carhart.wilderness.net/index.cfm?fuse=OEMP>

**Wilderness Inquiry**

<https://www.wildernessinquiry.org/>

**ATC Trail to Every Classroom**

<http://www.appalachiantrail.org/home/conservation/youth-community-engagement/trail-to-every-classroom>

**Grant Funding Sources**

**NWSA Grant Sources List**

<http://www.wildernessalliance.org/other_grant_sources>

**Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie NF Grant Calendar**

<http://goo.gl/sfDVnZ>

**Edutopia Grant List**

<http://www.edutopia.org/grants-and-resources>

**Grants for Teachers**

<http://www.grantsforteachers.net/>

**Grant Alert**

<http://www.grantsalert.com/grants>

**Grant Wrangler**

<http://www.grantwrangler.com/STEMresources.html>

**Places to Share Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteer.gov

Volunteermatch.org

Idealist.org

SciStarter.com (for citizen science projects)

Forest website and social media

Wilderness.net

Partner groups

Local volunteer sites (e.g., volunteerknoxville.org)

Local businesses that have volunteer programs

Local community calendars (newspaper, radio, etc.)

Email listserv of past volunteers

**Calendar of Recreation and Conservation Education Holidays\***

**January**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

**February**

Black History Month

**March**

National Wildlife Week

World Wildlife Day

National Women’s History Month

National Day of Unplugging

Great American Cleanup

**April**

Earth Day

National Environmental Education Week

Arab American Heritage Month

Stress Awareness Month

National Autism Awareness Month

**May**

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

Bird Day/World (Migratory) Bird Day

National Wildflower Week

National Mental Health Awareness Month

**June**

National Trails Day

National Get Outdoors Day

Great American Campout

Great Outdoors Month

National Pollinator Week

**July**

Independence Day

**August**

Family Heritage Month

National Water Quality Month

**September**

National Public Lands Day

Family Hiking Day

Wilderness Act Anniversary

National Wildlife Day

National Hunting and Fishing Day

National Preparedness Month

National Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15-October 15)

**October**

Reptile Awareness Day

Bat Appreciation Month

Feral Hog/Hog Out Month

Raptor Month

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

**November**

Take a Hike Day

Veteran’s Day

National Native American Heritage Month

America Recycles Day

REI #OptOutside Day

**December**

Christmas Bird Count Week

\*This list is not all-inclusive and is intended to provide ideas on events to tie Wilderness education into ongoing programming and outreach.

**District Wilderness Information Sheet**

**District Name:**

**District Staff Interviewed:**

**Priority Management Issues**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Issue\*/Priority Level** | **Wilderness Area** | **Description/Notes** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

\*Use standard issue list descriptions

**Shared/Adjacent Wilderness Management Issues/Considerations**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Issue/Consideration** | **Wilderness Area(s)** | **Description/Notes** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Current Education/Training Activities**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Description** |
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|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Current Resources and Partners**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Resource or Partner** | **Description/Role** |
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|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Information Outlets**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Location** | **Type of Info Distributed** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Identified Education/Training Needs\***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of Activity** | **Description** |
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|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

\*Include any brainstormed ideas that resulted from call, including other places to share information.

**External Factors/Resource Limitations**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Factor/Limitation** | **Effect on Education Plan** | **Ideas to Address Problem** |
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|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Follow-up Work Needed**

**Other Stakeholders To Interview**

* Insert list of stakeholders to interview related to this district and what the focus of the discussion is to be

**Follow-up Information Needed/Further Questions**

* Insert list of further information needed and questions to ask (and who to ask)

**Other Considerations/Notes**

* Insert list of other consideration and any other things to keep in mind when developing the plan

Note: consider use of this same template to map out information from stakeholder calls and into the same file for each district.