Recreation Site Monitoring - Field Techniques and Forms

for

The Forest Service’s Wilderness Stewardship Performance

Ideally, GPS units with data dictionaries (or GPS units in combination with PDAs) and digital cameras can be taken into the field, allowing for on-site electronic capture of data. This allows the observer to record the site coordinates of the site and then enter the other bits of information required:

* Campsite number
* Ground disturbance rating, between 1 and 4
* Tree damage rating, between 0 and 2
* Disturbed area rating, between 0 and 2
* Overall impact rating, between 1 and 8 (the sum of the three ratings above)
* Type and number of administratively provided structure.

Alternatively, data can be collected on paper forms. We provide two prototypes below but recommend that these be adapted to meet local needs. In particular, forms will vary depending on the frequency and type of administratively provided structures existing on campsites. If structures are rare, one column is probably sufficient to capture data. If particular types of structures are common, it might be most efficient to provide separate columns for each type of structure (e.g. toilets, fireplaces, etc.).

The first format is highly condensed, with multiple campsites on a page. Instructions could be taped into the inside cover of a pocket-sized, write-in-the-rain booklet, with data recorded on a single line for each campsite. The second format provides more detailed information on procedures on each form, but requires a page for each campsite. Note in each of the forms the opportunity to check whether or not an adaptation of the ground disturbance rating was used instead of the standard rating (see section on Special Situations in the protocol).

1. Condensed Form

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Campsite  Number  (#) | Site Coordinates  (UTM or LAT/LONG) | Ground  Disturbance  Rating\*  (1-4) | Tree  Damage  Rating  (0-2) | Disturbed  Area  Rating  (0-2) | Overall  Impact  Rating  (0-8) | Administratively  Provided  Structures  (list type and #) |
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\* place an asterisk after the rating if an adaptation of the ground disturbance rating was used instead of the standard rating (see section on Special Situations in the protocol).

2. Detailed Form – One form per campsite

SITE INFORMATION

Date:

Campsite number:

Location:

Crew:

GPS Coordinates:

UTM: \_ \_ \_. \_ \_ \_ m East \_ \_ \_ \_. \_ \_ \_ m North

LAT.: \_ \_ 0 \_ \_ ‘ \_ \_ “ LONG.: \_ \_0 \_ \_ ‘ \_ \_ “

USGS Map Quad:

Photo ID:

CAMPSITE CONDITION RATING – Check the rating that applies for each Part described below.

**Part A. Disturbance to Groundcover Rating**

(Note – See the SPECIAL SITUATIONS section in the Campsite Monitoring Procedures for alternate criteria if needed. If an alternative is used, place an asterisk after the rating)

1 - \_\_\_\_\_ – Groundcover vegetation flattened, not permanently damaged, minimal change except for rock fireplace.

2 - \_\_\_\_\_ – Ground vegetation worn away around fireplace or center of activity.

3 - \_\_\_\_\_ – Ground vegetation lost on most of site, most humus and litter still present.

4 - \_\_\_\_\_ – Bare mineral spoil widespread over most of site.

**Part B. Tree Damage Rating**

0 - \_\_\_\_\_ 0-3 severely damaged trees or no trees on site

1 - \_\_\_\_\_ 4-10 severely damaged trees

2 - \_\_\_\_\_ 11 or more severely damaged trees

**Part C. Disturbed Area Rating**

0 - \_\_\_\_\_ 0-25 m2 (0-250 ft2)

1 - \_\_\_\_\_ 26-100 m2 (251-1000 ft2)

2- \_\_\_\_\_ More than 100 m2 (more than 1000 ft2)

**Part D. Overall Impact Rating**

\_\_\_\_\_ Sum of index ratings for Part A + Part B + Part C

**Part E. Administrative Structures** (record number of structures present by type)

\_\_\_\_\_ Toilet \_\_\_\_\_ Hitch rail \_\_\_\_\_ Sign

\_\_\_\_\_ Fireplace \_\_\_\_\_ Corral \_\_\_\_\_ Tent pad

\_\_\_\_\_ Food storage pole or box Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL number of structures