

Use of Native Materials in Wilderness Policy References **Underline Emphasis Added; January 2007**

Wilderness Act

Section 2 (a): “For this purpose there is hereby established a National Wilderness Preservation System to be composed of federally owned areas designated by Congress as “wilderness areas”, and these shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of their wilderness character, and for the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as wilderness...”

Section 2 (c): “A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this chapter an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation;...”

Section 4 (b): Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, each agency administering any area designated as wilderness shall be responsible for preserving the wilderness character of the area and shall so administer such area for such other purposes for which it may have been established as also to preserve its wilderness character. Except as otherwise provided in this Act, wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use.

Section 4 (c): “Except as specifically provided for in this chapter, and subject to existing private rights, there shall be no commercial enterprise and no permanent road within any wilderness area designated by this Act and, except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purpose of this Act (including measures required in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area), there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing of aircraft, no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area.”

Wilderness Character Monitoring – from “Monitoring Selected Conditions Related to Wilderness Character: A National Framework” April 2005; RMRS-GTR-151

Wilderness Character: the four qualities of wilderness related to wilderness character -

- Untrammelled – wilderness is essentially unhindered and free from modern human control or manipulation.
- Natural – wilderness ecological systems are substantially free from the effects of modern civilization.
- Undeveloped – wilderness is essentially without permanent improvements or modern human occupation.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation – Wilderness provides outstanding opportunities for people to experience solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, including the values of inspiration and physical and mental challenge.

FSM Chapter 2320 Wilderness Management

2320.6 - The Wilderness Management Model and the Wilderness Act

The Wilderness Management Model (ex. 01) illustrates the wilderness resource, as defined by the Wilderness Act, and the basis for Forest Service wilderness management direction.

The Wilderness Management Model (ex. 01 – *not included; see FSM*) shows the relationship between the natural, undisturbed purity of a wilderness area and the human influence that affects it. The more human influence, the lower the purity of a wilderness is; the less human influence on a wilderness, the higher, or purer, the wilderness area could be.

In absolute wilderness there is no human influence preventing the area from retaining its purest natural form. It is unlikely, however, that this condition exists anywhere on earth. There are few places, if any, remaining where humans have neither set foot nor where human influences, through pollution, have not been felt. The Wilderness Act defines wilderness at some point below absolute wilderness.

The Act permits certain activities and contains prerogatives that also tend to lessen the opportunities to reach absolute wilderness. Mining is permitted on valid claims; access to valid occupancies and private land is provided for; and fire control, insect and disease control, grazing, and visitor use are permitted. Considered together, these modifications define legal wilderness. Manage wilderness toward attaining the highest level of purity in wilderness within legal constraints.

Each designated wilderness is affected by a variety of human influences that vary in intensity. In one area, human influence may be very limited; in another area, major disturbances occur. The number and intensity of these influences cause a gap between the attainable legislative wilderness and the conditions that exist on a wilderness ("X"). The goal of wilderness management is to identify these influences, define their causes, remedy them, and close the gap ("A") between the attainable level of purity and the level that exists on each wilderness ("X").

Where a choice must be made between wilderness values and visitor or any other activity, preserving the wilderness resource is the overriding value. Economy, convenience, commercial value, and comfort are not standards of management or use of wilderness. Because uses and values on each area vary, management and administration must be tailored to each area. Even so, all wilderness areas are part of one National Wilderness Preservation System and their management must be consistent with the Wilderness Act and their establishing legislation.

2322 - WILDERNESS PLANNING

2322.01 – Authority

2322.02 - Objectives

2. Ensure that other resources and activities within each wilderness are coordinated and in harmony with the wilderness resource.

2322.03 - Policy

2. The wilderness component of the forest plan shall include, as a minimum, the following:

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.

2323 - MANAGEMENT OF OTHER RESOURCES IN WILDERNESS

2323.13f - Transportation System

Design, construct, and maintain the transportation system in wilderness to provide access to and within a wilderness that meets the wilderness objectives described in the forest plan.

1. Trails. Trails are an acceptable improvement. Construct and maintain trails to standards described in FSH 2309.18, Trails Management Handbook. National Recreation Trails are generally not designated within wilderness (FSM 2350).
 - a. Design and locate trails so that nonmotorized and nonmechanical equipment can be used for construction and management.
 - b. Design and locate trails to fit into the natural landscape as unobtrusively as possible.
 - c. Maintain trails by nonmotorized methods except for situations described in section 2326.
2. Bridges. Design bridges to minimize the impact on the wilderness. Select locations that minimize the size and complexity of the structure. Provide or replace bridges only:
 - a. When no other route or crossing is reasonably available.
 - b. Where the crossing, during the primary season of public use, cannot be negotiated afoot safely, or cannot be forded by horses safely.
 - c. Where unacceptable bank damage will occur from visitors seeking a crossing.
 - d. Where flood waters frequently destroy or damage less sturdy structures.

2323.53 - Tree Use

2323.53a - Administrative Use

Trees may be cut for use in the construction and maintenance of authorized structures located within the wilderness when it is not reasonably possible to obtain the necessary material from outside the wilderness. Cut trees away from trails or campsites and remove or disguise the evidence of cutting. Meet the visual quality objective of retention.

FSM 2300 - RECREATION, WILDERNESS, AND RELATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT **CHAPTER 2350 - TRAIL, RIVER, AND SIMILAR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES**

2350.3 - Policy

2. Emphasize opportunities, in all ROS classes, that require minimal supporting facilities for the convenience of users, more self-reliance by the users, and less intrusion by constructed facilities upon the natural environment.

2353 - NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM TRAILS

2353.03 - Policy

4. Emphasize long-term cost effectiveness and need when developing or rehabilitating trail facilities.

R1 Directive (Trails Manual)

2353.24 - Preconstruction and Construction

2. Trail Construction/Reconstruction.

Bridge replacement or repair is generally a top priority. However, if a stream is safely fordable during the normal use season, or if a stock ford and hiker footlog is adequate, consider these as alternatives to bridge replacement.

FSH 2309.18 - TRAILS MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK **WO AMENDMENT 2309.18-91-2** **EFFECTIVE 11/8/91**

CHAPTER 2 - TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

2.02 - OBJECTIVES. The objective of trail development is to provide a facility that minimally affects resources, that provides opportunities for satisfying recreation experiences, that requires minimal maintenance, and that serves the intended type and level of use.

2.24 - Wilderness Considerations. Trails and waterways leading to and within wilderness areas become the principal management tools for achieving wilderness management objectives. The Forest Land and Resource Management Plan establishes the specific objectives of wilderness management, including appropriate levels and types of use. The transportation system serving the wilderness shall be planned and managed accordingly (FSM 2323).

The criteria for locating, establishing, and maintaining trails or waterways in wildernesses are based on the management objectives outlined in the wilderness operating plan. The standards for trails and waterways within a wilderness will reflect the minimum requirements to achieve the following goals:

1. To construct and maintain the trail and necessary facilities so that they appear to be a part of the wilderness environment and not an intrusion upon it.

6. To protect and perpetuate the ecological wilderness character.

CHAPTER 4 - TRAIL OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

4.2 - TRAIL MAINTENANCE. The purpose of maintenance is to preserve the trail and related facilities to meet established objectives.

4.29a - Wilderness Areas. Within wilderness areas, maintenance should complement management objectives and maintain or gradually improve/restore the quality of the natural environment.