

Recreation on Public Lands



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A Landscape-level Approach...

- What are people seeking?
- How do we encourage people to treat the recreation setting appropriately?
- How do we know if we are meeting our management objectives over time?
- How do we relate people's demands to capabilities of the landscape?



Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

- Based upon a behavioral approach to providing desired recreation experiences
- Relates desired experiences to characteristics of the landscape
- Compatible with multiple-use management
- Adopted by many land management agencies

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Historical "Products or Output" of Natural Resource Management

- Timber
- Wood Products
- Fish & Game
- Grazing
- Local economic support



Willamette National Forest, Oregon



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Current Trends in Natural Resource Management

- **A balance of...**
- Habitat management
- Forest management
- Ecosystem management
 - Aquatic
 - Riparian
 - Endangered Species
- Visitor management
 - Access
 - Allocation/Rationing
 - Impact management/mitigation

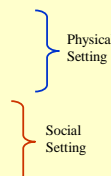


Eagle Cap Wilderness, Oregon

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A New Perspective for Outdoor Recreation Management

- The **output** of recreation resource management is **MORE** than just providing recreation facilities & activities.
- It is important **where** we provide them...
- The **mix** of facilities, densities, & proximity is important...
- The **mix** of rules & regulations, restrictions, assistance, seasons, alternatives, & behavior of others is equally important...



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Functional Relationships

- **Experiences** derived in recreation are related to the setting in which they occur.
- **Settings** are a function of environmental factors, such as...
 - *Physical* (campsites, trails, parking facilities, restrooms, etc.)
 - *Social* (density of users, type of encounters, people's behavior)
 - *Managerial* (rules, regulations, restrictions)
- The **range of settings** managers provide affect the experiences that people can have!

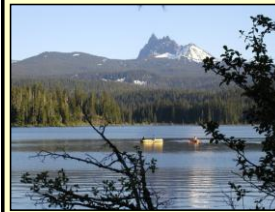


A Behavioral Approach

- People seek opportunities to engage in preferred activities --
- In preferred settings --
 - Preferred *Physical* setting,
 - Preferred *Social* setting, &
 - Preferred *Managerial* setting
- To realize desired experiences.



Range of Preferred Physical Environmental Settings



Marion Lake, Willamette N.F.

- **Landscape Features**
 - Lakes, rivers, mountains, deserts, forests
- **Facilities**
 - Tent camping, RV camping, pit toilets, showers, visitor centers, trailhead register
- **Access & Remoteness**
 - Paved roads, dirt roads, foot bridges, trail improvements, trail signage, no trails

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Range of Preferred Social Environmental Settings

- **Social Interaction**
 - Low to High levels
 - “In” vs. “out” group
- **Proximity & Privacy**
 - Other visitors close vs. distant
 - Encounters (*many/few*)
 - Use density (*high/low*)
- **Behavior Perceptions**
 - Objectionable behavior
 - Degrees of compliance with regulations



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Range of Preferred Managerial Environmental Settings



- **Indirect Management**
 - Light-handed management
 - Education (LNT)
 - Trailhead permits
 - Higher risk
- **Direct Management**
 - Heavy-handed Management
 - Use-limits
 - Fees (*NW Forest Pass*)
 - Enforcement/patrol
 - Lower risk



Managers must provide for a “*Spectrum*” of recreation opportunities

- Selecting recreation opportunities...

- Range & mix of setting attributes

- Social
- Physical
- Managerial
- No single place can offer all the possibilities!



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Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)

- ROS is based on the premise that people expect certain levels of development related to the character of the setting and the type of recreation they prefer.

- Recall, we (*future managers*) want to...
 - Provide recreation **opportunities** (for)
 - Preferred **activities** (in)
 - Preferred **settings** (physical, social, & managerial)

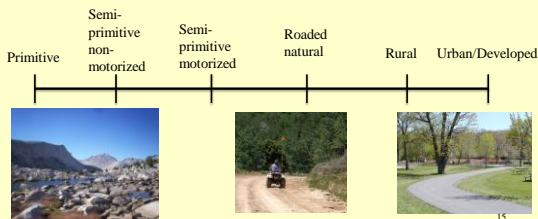
- **Activity → Setting → Desired Experience**

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Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS):

Expectations for level of development & naturalness

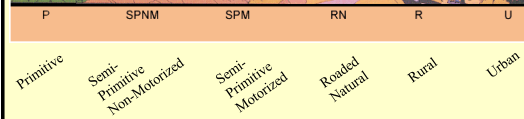
Physical: Size of area, remoteness, evidence of humans
Social: Number and types of encounters with people
Managerial: Regimentation, control, facilities



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A Spectrum of Opportunities

SOLITUDE / **RISK TAKING** / **SELF RELIANCE** (Left side)
SECURITY / **COMFORT** / **SOCIALIZING** (Right side)



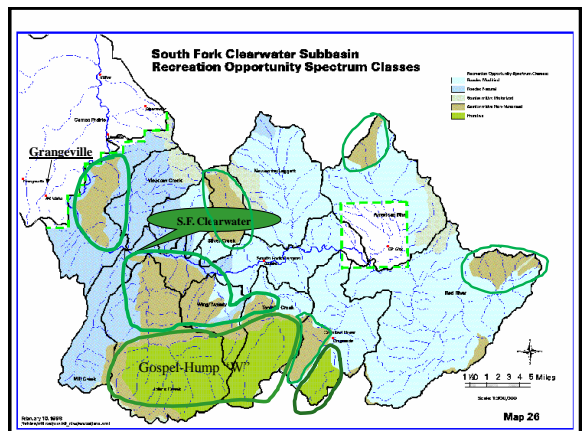
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ROS Classes (*Spectrum*)

- Primitive
- Semi-primitive, non-motorized
- Semi-primitive, motorized
- Routed natural
- Rural
- Urban/Developed

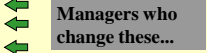


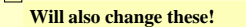
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ROS is based upon a behavioral approach to Recreation

- We manage natural settings to provide recreation opportunities.
- People seek opportunities to engage in preferred activities --
- In preferred settings --
 - Physical setting,
 - Social setting,
 - Managerial setting
- To realize desired experiences.







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ROS

Urban/developed



Primitive



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How do we maintain desired conditions over time?

Increasing Demand from . . .

- Increasing population & urbanization . . .
- New technology, equipment, access
- Increased mobility

Leads to Increasing pressure to Develop sites . . .

- Modernize, harden, enlarge, density
- Advertise, expanded seasons, special events . . .

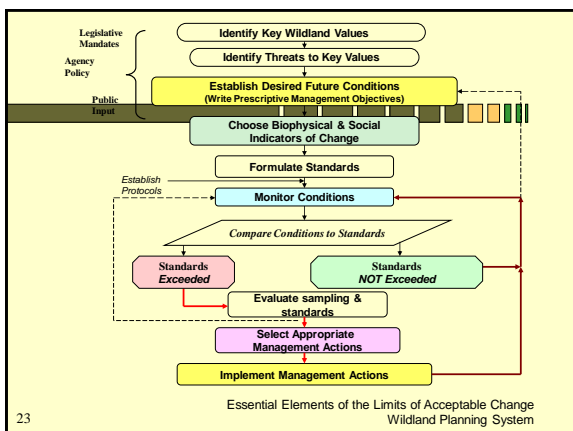
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What can we do?

- Define Desired Future Conditions (DFCs)
- Select indicators of change
- Set standards for what is acceptable
- Monitor
- Implement management actions if standards are exceeded

“Limits of Acceptable Change”

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Limits of Acceptable Change

1. Define Desired Future Conditions
2. Select Indicators of Change
3. Set Standards (how much change?)
4. Monitor
5. Implement Management Actions

“If it isn’t broke, don’t fix it!”

“It is trackable & traceable”

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Recreation Management on Public Lands

7 Leave No Trace (LNT) Principles

1. Plan ahead and prepare
2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces
3. Dispose of waste properly
4. Leave what you find
5. Minimize campfire impacts
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors

