

**Forest Service Manual
National Headquarters (Washington Office)
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**Forest Service Manual 2300 – Recreation, Wilderness, and Related Resource Management
Zero Code**

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Approved by: Kenderick Arney, Regional Forester

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Responsible Staff: Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources

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Digest: The following is an explanation of changes throughout the directive by section.

2301 – Authority: Adds Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences Act (EXPLORE) (16 USC 8411) to the Authority section.

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2301 – Authority

The goal of Recreation, Heritage, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic Rivers Management is to provide social, economic, and environmental benefits to individuals, families, and communities while preserving and protecting the character for which Recreation, Heritage, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River Resources are valued or established. Effective management of Recreation, Heritage, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic Rivers enhances the experience of the beauty, integrity, ecology, and cultural qualities of places where people recreate in the National Forest System, thereby promoting their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being; their social connectivity and identity; and community vitality for present and future generations.

The following laws and regulations govern the Recreation, Heritage, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic Rivers programs:

1. *Organic Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 551)*. This Act authorizes the regulation of national forests.
2. *Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act (MUSY) (16 U.S.C. 528-531)*. This Act directs the Forest Service to develop and administer the renewable surface resources of national forests for multiple uses and sustained yield of the products and services obtained from those resources.
3. *Wilderness Act of 1964 (16 U.S.C. 1131-1136)*. This Act establishes the National Wilderness Preservation System, defines a wilderness area and its purpose, addresses management of wilderness areas, and prescribes the process for adding additional wilderness areas to the system.
4. *Architectural Barriers Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151 et seq.)*. This Act requires that all facilities designed, constructed, altered, or leased by a Federal agency comply with applicable accessibility guidelines.
5. *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794 and 794d)*. Section 504 of this Act (29 U.S.C. 794) prohibits Federal agencies and recipients of Federal financial assistance from discriminating against any person with a disability.
6. *National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241 (note), 1241-1249)*. This Act establishes a National Trails System of National Recreation, National Scenic, and National Historic Trails and connecting and side trails for the purpose of providing trail recreation opportunities. The Act addresses development and administration of these trails.

7. *Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1271 (note), 1271-1287)*. This Act establishes the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, designates the rivers included in the system, prescribes a process for designating additions to the system, requires the Federal land management agencies to protect and enhance the values for which wild and scenic rivers are designated, which include free-flowing condition, water quality, and outstandingly remarkable values; and requires the Federal land management agencies to address user capacities in a comprehensive river management plan for each wild and scenic river.
8. *National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f)*. This Act establishes the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and directs Federal agencies to identify historic properties and nominate them to the National Register of Historic Places.
9. *Archaeological Resources Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 470aa et seq.)*. This Act provides for criminal and civil penalties for removal, damage, alteration, or defacement of archaeological resources. The Act also establishes permit requirements for archaeological investigations.
10. *Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801-6814)*. This Act authorizes the Forest Service to charge standard and expanded amenity recreation fees and to require and charge fees for special recreation permits. Fee revenues may be retained and spent by the Forest Service in accordance with the Act's requirements.
11. *Section 7 of the Granger-Thye Act (16 U.S.C. 580d)*. This Act authorizes issuance of special use permits for up to 30 years for the use of federally owned improvements and associated land under the administrative control of the Forest Service and provides for offset of the land use fee for certain types of work performed on the authorized improvements at the holder's expense.
12. *Term Permit Act (16 U.S.C. 497)*. This Act authorizes issuance of permits for up to 30 years and 80 acres for privately owned improvements on National Forest System lands.
13. *National Forest Ski Area Permit Act (16 U.S.C. 497b)*. This Act authorizes issuance of permits for up to 40 years for Nordic and alpine ski areas and associated facilities.
14. *Section 8104 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) (25 U.S.C. 3054)*. Upon the Forest Service's approval of a request from an Indian tribe, this Act authorizes the Forest Service to temporarily close public access specifically identified as National Forest System lands, to protect the privacy of tribal activities for traditional and cultural purposes. Section 8102(5) of the Act defines the term "Indian tribe" as any Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or other community, the name of

which is included on a list published by the Secretary of Interior pursuant to section 104 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (24 U.S.C. 479a-1). Section 8102(9) of the Act defines the term “traditional and cultural purpose” with respect to a definable use, area, or practice to mean that the use, area, or practice is identified by an Indian tribe as traditional or cultural because of the long-established significance or ceremonial nature of the use, area, or practice to the Indian tribe.

15. *Travel Management Rule (36 CFR Part 212, Subpart B)*. These regulations require that motor vehicle use on National Forest System roads, on National Forest System trails, and in areas on National Forest System lands must be designated by vehicle class and, if appropriate, by time of year by the responsible official on administrative units or Ranger Districts.
16. *Special Use Regulations (36 CFR Part 251, Subpart C)*. These regulations authorize the Forest Service to issue authorizations for use and occupancy of National Forest System lands.
17. *Wilderness and Primitive Areas (36 CFR Part 293)*. These regulations govern wilderness and primitive areas on National Forest System lands.
18. *Special Areas (36 CFR Part 294)*. These regulations govern special areas on National Forest System lands.
19. *Protection of Archaeological Resources (36 CFR Part 296)*. These regulations govern protection of archaeological resources on National Forest System lands.
20. *Wild and Scenic Rivers (36 CFR Part 297)*. These regulations govern wild and scenic rivers on National Forest System lands.
21. *Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Programs or Activities of USDA (7 CFR Parts 15e and 15b)*. The USDA regulations implementing section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as it applies to programs and activities conducted by USDA are found at 7 CFR Part 15e. The USDA regulations implementing section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as it applies to USDA-assisted programs are found at 7 CFR Part 15b. These provisions address program accessibility; requirements for accessible programs in new, altered, or existing facilities; accessibility transition planning; accessible communication requirements; and compliance procedures.
22. *Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences Act (EXPLORE) (16 USC 8411)*. This act declares that it is the policy of the Federal Government to foster and encourage recreation on Federal recreational lands and waters, to the extent consistent with the laws applicable to specific areas of Federal recreational lands and waters, including multiple-use mandates and land management planning requirements.

2302 – Objectives

1. Serve visitors and local communities. Provide a broad range of nature- and heritage-based outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities for the responsible use and enjoyment of local communities and their visitors.
 - a. In collaboration with communities and other providers of outdoor recreation, use visitor and local community characteristics and preferences for recreation and tourism activities, settings, experiences, and benefits to guide recreation planning, management, marketing, and monitoring.
 - b. Identify and enhance recreational, scenic, and culturally distinctive landscapes that comprise special places to provide outstanding quality and diverse recreation opportunities.
 - c. Identify, analyze, and monitor the changing demographic composition of the country and regional market areas to adapt recreation settings, facilities, and programs for greater use, enjoyment and understanding of the National Forest System.
 - d. Strive to provide sustainable recreation opportunities and programs that equitably serve the needs of local communities and visitors.
2. Strive to protect and enhance natural, scenic, cultural, wilderness, and wild and scenic rivers resources.
 - a. Create an integrated and sustainable program that fosters conservation of natural and cultural resources.
 - b. Reduce the impacts and conflicts resulting from recreational use through education, management, monitoring, and enforcement.
 - c. Preserve an enduring resource of wilderness and wild and scenic rivers for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.
3. Address public safety through utilization of appropriate risk management approaches across the spectrum of recreation settings.

2303 – Policy

1. Provide a wide range of recreation settings and opportunities, from the most primitive and wild to the highly developed.
2. Provide recreation and tourism opportunities that can sustain responsible use within their environmental and social constraints.
3. Provide recreation uses that are appropriate to the natural setting and that balance the needs of national and local communities. Develop cooperative relationships with local communities and other governmental agencies to provide recreation and tourism facilities and programs.
4. Identify markets served by recreation and tourism in the National Forest System, develop recreation and tourism objectives using benefit- and outcome-based management concepts; and prescribe essential recreation setting conditions and opportunities that will produce the desired benefits.
5. Work with non-profit partners, volunteers, the private sector and the Agency workforce to sustain natural and cultural resources, to enhance the recreation experience, and to deepen public stewardship of the National Forest System.
6. Use prudent decision models that include quality data, transparent analysis, and public participation. Monitor key performance measures and results with information maintained in a database.
7. Use sound research practices to identify cultural patterns and preferences, adapt facilities and programs, and design outreach activities that encourage use by a diverse population. Incorporate universal design principles into all facilities and programs.
8. Strive to create a network of open space at a landscape scale that supports healthy ecosystems and sustainable communities. Adjust land ownership patterns as necessary to connect open spaces and other green infrastructure to provide access to the National Forest System lands.
9. Preserve wilderness, wild and scenic river, and cultural resources. Build staff and constituencies that will help meet the challenges of wilderness, wild and scenic river, and cultural resource stewardship, as well as the recreation and heritage programs as a whole.
10. Manage recreation, cultural, volunteer, wilderness, and wild and scenic river resources with professional managers and well-trained technicians.

11. Provide comprehensive and current information to the public that is easily accessible with modern communication devices about recreation opportunities on National Forest System lands. Include information about potential hazards so that visitors can prepare and make informed decisions about engaging in recreational activities, to the extent practicable and appropriate.
12. Use the National Recreation Reservation Service to connect the public with America's natural and cultural heritage through recreation opportunities on National Forest System lands, consistent with applicable law and directives.

2304 – Responsibility

2304.1 – Chief

The Chief is responsible for forwarding recommendations for potential wilderness areas and suitable wild and scenic rivers and acceptance of land donations for the Wilderness System to the Secretary of Agriculture, who then may forward these recommendations to Congress for consideration. Decisions pertaining to wilderness management that are reserved to the Chief are detailed in FSM 2320.

2304.2 – Washington Office Director of Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources

The Washington Office Director of Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources is responsible for:

1. Creating strategies for the Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resource Programs that integrate with Agency-wide strategic plans.
2. Aligning human and capital resources and long- and short-range program performance measures and goals to achieve Agency and program-specific strategies.
3. Coordinating related resources management activities with other Washington Office staffs and regional director counterparts.
4. Coordinating with other Federal agencies, national organizations, key stakeholders, and other parties who work on recreation, heritage, and volunteer resource issues.
5. Overseeing training and development to enhance Agency expertise and scientific knowledge in Recreation, Heritage, Volunteers and Related Resource management.

6. Coordinating with the research community regarding emerging issues, trends, and demographic changes in recreation to align the Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resource Programs to enhance visitor use and satisfaction.
7. Providing information to the public about Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resource Programs, opportunities and public safety information in a variety of media suitable to the resource and audience.
8. Demonstrating and reporting performance accomplishments.
9. Establishing national quality standards for management of recreation and heritage resources.

2304.3 – Washington Office Director of Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers

The Washington Office Director of Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers is responsible for:

1. Creating strategies for the Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River Programs that integrate with agency-wide strategic plans.
2. Aligning human and capital resources and long- and short-range program performance measures and goals to achieve agency and program specific strategies.
3. Coordinating related resources management activities with other Washington Office staffs and Regional Director counterparts.
4. Coordinating with other Federal agencies, national organizations, key stakeholders and interest groups who work on Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River issues.
5. Overseeing training and development to enhance agency expertise and scientific knowledge in Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers and related resource management.
6. Coordinating with the research community regarding emerging issues, trends, and demographic changes in recreation to align the Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River strategies and programs to enhance visitor use and satisfaction.
7. Providing information to the public about Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River Resource opportunities in a variety of media suitable to the resource and audience.
8. Demonstrating and reporting performance accomplishments.

2304.4 – Regional Foresters

Regional Foresters are responsible for approving decisions pertaining to Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River management as detailed in FSM 2320.

2304.5 – Regional Directors with Responsibility for Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic Rivers

Regional Directors are responsible for:

1. Aligning regional and national long- and short-range goals for management of Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River Programs.
2. Coordinating with the Washington Office, their Regional Office, and national forest and grassland staffs in their Region.
3. Coordinating with States, Tribes, regional organizations, and private entities who work on Recreation, Heritage, Wilderness, and related resource management issues.
4. Assuring consistency and compliance with national quality standards for implementation of National Recreation, Heritage, and related resource programs.
5. Ensuring that staff is trained in Recreation, Wilderness, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River, and related resource management issues.
6. Ensuring that staff is trained in risk management, as appropriate.

2304.6 – Forest and Grassland Supervisors

Forest and Grassland Supervisors are responsible for:

1. Setting long and short-range goals for Recreation, Wilderness, and related resource management through forest planning, program development, and budgeting.
2. Integrating Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River Programs with other resource and service programs in their administrative unit.
3. Coordinating and cooperating on Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River management with other administrative units; State, Tribes, county, local agencies; private organizations; and the public.

4. Monitoring recreation, heritage, and related resource management in the Ranger Districts in their administrative unit to ensure consistency with Agency policies and standards.
5. Ensuring that staff is trained appropriately in Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River Management.
6. Ensuring that staff is trained in risk management, as appropriate.

2304.7 – District Rangers

District Rangers are responsible for:

1. Administering, scheduling, and ensuring the quality of Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and related resource programs.
2. Integrating Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River Programs with other resource and service programs.
3. Coordinating and cooperating on Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River Management with other Ranger Districts; State, Tribes, county, and local, agencies; private organizations; and the public.
4. Ensuring that staff is trained appropriately in Recreation, Heritage, Volunteer, Wilderness, and Wild and Scenic River Management.
5. Ensuring that staff is trained in risk management, as appropriate.

2309 – Handbooks

2309.1 – Internal Service-Wide Handbooks

2309.13 – Recreation Site Handbook

This handbook contains detailed instructions on recreation fees.

2309.18 – Trails Management Handbook

This handbook contains detailed instructions on trail management, maintenance, and construction.

2309.2 – Internal Unit Handbooks

2309.22 – Landscape Management Handbook

This handbook provides concepts and guidelines for planning and design of visual aspects of multiple use land management.

2309.23 – Recreation Site Development Planning Handbook

This handbook provides unit standards and procedures for detailed site development planning.

2309.24 – Cultural Resources Handbook

This handbook provides unit standards and procedural details for cultural resource programs and activities.