



CHAPTER 9

INTERPRETIVE SIGNS

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9.1 Purpose

Use interpretive signs to interpret natural, cultural, and historic features and stories for forest visitors. Also use them to interpret management activities of National Forest System lands and to showcase national forests and grasslands as “working” public lands.

9.1.1 Definitions

Interpretation is a communication process designed to reveal the meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to the public, through first-hand involvement with objects, artifacts, landscapes, and sites. Interpretation tells a story and brings meaning and interest to a subject for the enjoyment of the visitor. It does not just provide facts.

Interpretive Signs communicate specific messages to visitors. These messages can be written to change behavior, educate, or evoke an emotion in the reader. They are most commonly used for self-guiding trails or for wayside exhibits at points of interest, such as viewing areas and resource management areas. They are mounted so they are visible to all viewers and can be constructed of many different materials.

Interpretive Services (IS) is the organized district- or forest-level program that provides communications services to forest visitors and others. It supports management objectives, tells the national forest story, and reveals meanings of and relationships among built, manipulated, natural, cultural, and other forest features. The IS Program’s main components are orientation, information, and interpretation. The program functions as a customer service tool, a management tool, and a public awareness tool.

To be “interpretive,” the communication process should be based on Tilden’s interpretive principles. These principles state that interpretation must:

- *Catch* the attention or arouse the curiosity of the audience.
- *Relate* the message to the everyday life of the audience.
- *Reveal* the essence of the subject through a unique viewpoint.
- *Address the whole* by showing logical significance of an object to a higher level concept or story line.
- *Strive for message unity* by use of a sufficient but varied repetition of cues to create and accentuate a particular mood, theme, aura, or atmosphere.

Interpretive signs:

- Use a combination of well-written text and professional graphics to convey a message.
- Increase visitor enjoyment through the appreciation and understanding of features, concepts, themes, and stories of the natural, cultural, created, managed, and historic environments.
- Explain management of National Forest System resources.
- Guide or modify visitor behavior to reduce visitor impacts to resources or facilities.

9.1.2 Advantages

Interpretive signs have a number of advantages over other media such as they:

- Produce more visitor contacts than all other IS contacts combined.
- Can be relatively inexpensive when cost is compared against visitor contact.
- Convey a consistent message to many people at one time and can be viewed at a visitor's convenience.
- Are in place at all times and available to visitors 24 hours each day.

9.1.3 Disadvantages

Interpretive signs do have some disadvantages, however. They:

- Are nonpersonal. Contacts by Forest Service personnel are much more effective.
- Communicate one way and may become outdated.
- Have no tangible "take home" value except for the visitor's photographs.
- May draw attention to a fragile resource that, as a result, may be damaged or destroyed through depreciative behavior.
- Are vulnerable to damage by weathering, decay, wildlife, and vandalism.

9.2 Planning

Interpretive sign planning is an exacting process that requires detailed interdisciplinary participation, including the use of interpretive specialists.

9.2.1 Need

Consider the following in determining the need for interpretive signs:

- (1) Is there something forest visitors can see, smell, or hear at the site that needs explaining?
- (2) Is there something interesting at the site that forest visitors will probably miss if it is not interpreted?
- (3) Will forest visitors get more from their experiences if appropriate interpretive signs are provided?
- (4) Is interpretive signing appropriate or would another method work better?
- (5) Are there impacts or damage being caused by visitor use or behavior that can be alleviated or stopped by an interpretive sign?
- (6) Will enough visitors see the sign to make it cost-effective?
- (7) Is this an action planned for in the forest's interpretive plan or implementation schedule?
- (8) Is interpretive signing consistent with the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class of the proposed site?

Plan for the minimum number of signs needed to convey the appropriate message in a professional manner. Too many signs detract from their effectiveness.

9.2.2 Objectives

State the objectives of the sign in writing. They should support the objectives and goals listed in the interpretive plan for the site or unit. When developing interpretive signs, consider agency objectives as well as visitor expectations. For example, visitors to a particular site may want to learn something about an historic event that occurred there; the agency may want them to be aware that sites such as this one are being preserved and studied through an ongoing cultural resources management program. If it does not satisfy both parties' needs, an interpretive sign will only be partially effective. Clear objectives help to evaluate the effectiveness of the sign. Three levels of objectives should be addressed:

- (1) Educational—what does the Forest Service want the visitor to KNOW?

- (2) Behavioral—what does the Forest Service want the visitor to DO?
- (3) Emotional—what does the Forest Service want the visitor to FEEL?

Following is an example of the development of an interpretive sign dealing with visitor-caused damage to trees. Its placement would be in a well-visited area of a campground where tree vandalism has been a significant problem. Ideally, it would be near or adjacent to a tree that illustrates the intent of the sign. For this sign to be most effective, a visitor profile of the target audience is needed. For this example, assume major abusers are families with young children and teenagers who camp 2–3 times a year, live in an urban area, and do not have much sensitivity to or understanding of the environment. The objectives of the interpretive sign would be as follows:

- (1) KNOW: The visitor learns to identify three behaviors that cause injury to a tree.
- (2) DO: The visitor stops injuring trees in the campgrounds.
- (3) FEEL: The visitor learns to respect trees as living organisms.

Sample interpretive text illustrating these objectives:

[Artwork] First drawing—anthropomorphized tree wincing as person hammers nail into it to hang lantern; tree has bandages and scars on it, broken branches, not a robust tree—looks sick. Second drawing—healthy, happy tree, radiant with good health and vigor.

[Text] Ouch! Like you, trees can get sick or hurt. When bark is injured through such thoughtless acts as hammered nails, broken branches, and carvings, harmful insects and diseases can easily enter the tree. Look at the oak tree behind this sign. Does it look healthy? What signs of injury do you see?

Please help forest trees stay healthy by not using nails, carving bark, or breaking branches. You'll help them stay around a lot longer to provide shade, scenery, and wildlife homes and to protect soil from erosion.

It might also be helpful to offer some interpretive activities for children and their parents that touch on outdoor skills and ethics to further emphasize the Forest Service's message and to enhance people's awareness of trees.

9.2.3 Visitor Profile/ Marketing Research

Describe the characteristics of the visitors who will be reading the sign. It is also very important to determine what visitors need to be satisfied, what they like, and what their expectations are. In most cases, the researcher should ask the visitor what he or she needs, not just assume. This information can be obtained through both direct and indirect methods of marketing research. Contact someone who specializes in “service marketing” for assistance with research. This research should drive the entire interpretive planning process for the project. When it is known who forest’s visitors are and what they need, the Forest Service’s messages can be appropriately targeted to that particular group for maximum effectiveness and customer satisfaction.

9.2.4 Visitor Use Estimates

Determine the expected or preferred volume of visitation. This is a major consideration in determining where the sign should be placed, how large and complex the facility should be, and whether or not a sign is needed or justified.

9.2.5 Themes

Clearly state a theme and ensure that it is easily identifiable as the “thread” linking the various parts of the story the interpretive sign is to tell the public. A major theme covers a related group of interpretive signs, such as a self-guided interpretive trail, scenic byway route, or historic facility. Even a sign that is to stand alone, such as the sign described in 9.2.2, should have a theme.

For example:

- (1) A Journey Through Time. As visitors drive the scenic byway, they explore the history of the forest from prehistoric times to present-day management by the Forest Service.
- (2) Forest for the Future. This theme interprets management actions and techniques practiced over the long term for the recovery of the devastated forest.
- (3) Forests Produce Benefits for People. Where would we be without forests? The many uses and values of forests and forest products are interpreted.
- (4) Trees Hurt, Too. This theme interprets some of the characteristics that trees and humans share, such as injury and disease, and shows how they can affect the tree’s health.
- (5) Something for Everyone. The forest provides varied opportunities for natural and cultural recreation for visitors of all levels of ability and interest.

9.3 Design

Design is the final link between the visitor and information. Designs for interpretive signs should take into account the following:

- (1) Colors and images that attract target visitors
- (2) Key words in headings and subheadings that catch the visitor's attention and generate interest
- (3) Type sizes and styles that ensure easy readability
- (4) Height and angle that ensure comfortable head movement
- (5) Reading level that avoids exceeding the visitor's limitations

The goal is to design a sign that stops visitors, holds them, and effectively sends the desired message. Consider consulting a designer to achieve a professional, attractive, well-designed sign.

9.3.1 Text

Language is one of the basic forms of communication. However, keep written text to a minimum in an interpretive sign. Text writing is complex. Text must be researched, written, edited, and proofread, requiring time, effort, and expertise. Also, space for text is limited, yet text occupies a surprisingly large amount of space when properly sized and laid out. This is due to the need to maintain adequate letter size and spacing to ensure readability. Text must also be written at a level that is accessible to visitors with a wide range of experience and education. Finally, visitor interest in text is low. Research has shown that when text blocks exceed 50 to 75 words, visitor involvement declines rapidly.

Here are some tips to follow when writing text:

- (1) Use vivid language and active verbs.
- (2) To reach the widest audience, write to a 7th to 9th grade level.
- (3) Use short sentences and paragraphs.
- (4) Be conversational in tone.
- (5) Avoid technical jargon and cliches.
- (6) Avoid gender-specific language (for example, for fisherman, use angler; for stockmen, use stockhandlers).
- (7) Use upper and lower case lettering for text. Use caps only for headings or to emphasize a word or two.

Following are several examples of text illustrating the difference between interpretation and information.

Informative:

- (1) PAINTBRUSH (*Castellaja miniata*). The Indian paintbrush, or painted-cup, is a member of the figwort family. The flower is an inch or more long and the calyx tip is scarlet in color. Paintbrush usually grows in the mountains along streams and in wet places below 11,000 feet.
- (2) Stalagmites, which rise from the floor when dripping water deposits minerals, are usually larger in diameter than stalactites and more rounded on top.

Interpretive:

- (1) There's no longer anything remaining of the old cookhouse, with its long table covered with brightly colored tablecloth, where the miners ate three hearty meals a day. Imagine the breakfast-time aroma of fresh hot coffee brewing and the sound of eggs and bacon sizzling on the grill. The men were also served hotcakes, fried potatoes, and toast with homemade jam.
- (2) Clark's nutcrackers have the habits of crows, the colors of jays, and are in fact cousins to both. The most forward of all our birds, they will steal food off the picnic table from under your very nose.

9.3.2 Graphics

Illustrations, maps, drawings, photos, colors, typestyles, and general aesthetics are all encompassed in the graphics development of the project. It is the combination of these elements that attracts and involves the visitor more than anything else.

Use graphics to:

- (1) Draw viewer attention
- (2) Complement the text
- (3) Add to the understanding of the subject illustrated
- (4) Tell a significant story visually

9.3.3 Organization Identification

Identification of forest, agency, and Department is not required on interpretive signs if the area adjacent to the sign has good organization identification. When required, include organization identifica-

tion in the sign design. This should be done in an effective manner that does not detract from the sign message. One method is to place the Forest Service shield in the lower right- or left-hand corner of the sign. Or it may be desirable to use the shield and the forest name along the bottom of the sign. Other cooperating organizations should also be identified.

9.3.4 Sign Layout

Skillfully layout design to provide high quality signs that provide effective subject interpretation. Pay particular attention to the following:

- (1) *Make Sign Right Size.* Consider the location and the distance from which the sign will be read. Letter size shall provide easy legibility from planned viewing distance (see Chapter 2 for size guidelines). Text and graphics are also factors in determining sign size. Consider using standard sign sizes for cost-effectiveness. Make the sign no larger than necessary.
- (2) *Allow Right Amount of Space Around Text.* The text should not be crowded. Leave enough space between blocks of text and headings and around the border for easy reading. Borders are also helpful for containing the graphics and copy.
- (3) *Avoid Diverting Attention From Message.* Design the support structure to blend and harmonize with the sign and the environment. Low profile signs, for example, should be used on overlooks. Although there are exceptions, interpretive signs are usually rectangular. Unusual shapes compete with the text.
- (4) *Avoid Distractions.* Odd colors, awkward designs, unusual words, or over emphasis on symbols and identification are examples of distractions.

9.3.5 Construction Materials

A variety of construction materials are available that, when properly used, have the potential to enhance sign effectiveness. Select sign materials based on appropriateness for the site, longevity, esthetics, cost, required maintenance, and so forth.

Following is a partial list of available materials to consider.

Anodized aluminum. Also known as Duratone, Dura-Etch, and Novalloy. Very expensive, but its long life and low maintenance costs make the product cost-efficient. Very susceptible to scratching, but impervious to weather. Finish is in gold, bronze, or silver tones. Recommended for use in high-visitor-use areas. It is also the media of choice for recognition plaques. Can use photos in the process at an extra cost.

Gator foam. A styrofoam board faced and backed with illustration board. Image and text are screened onto the paper face after it has been prepared with a coat of paint. Product is for temporary interior displays, presentations, and master plans. Light, durable, and attractive. If it is used outside, it should be enclosed in a moisture-proof case; however, other materials are better suited for exterior use. Does receive multiple colors, but no photos unless they are adhered to the panels.

High-impact styrene. An extremely durable and attractive material best suited for interior use. Similar in quality to fiberglass, only the image and copy are screened on the opaque material. Can be used for high-use areas. Will withstand considerable abuse; however, image and copy can be scratched on the surface if one works at it. Temperature and weather tolerant. Signs can be made as large as 4 by 8 feet.

Embedded fiberglass. Also known as Modulite and Fibrex, this is a process that produces a screen print substrate encapsulated into layers of fiberglass. Available in multiple colors. An attractive sign that is very resistant to shattering, weathering, fire, and graffiti and can be applied to virtually any surface. Available in 1/16- and 1/8-inch thicknesses.

Masonite silkscreen. Material comes in 1/4-inch Masonite that is silk-screened in multicolor latex enamel. The material is inexpensive but also limited in its applications. Best for interior use in displays or cabinets. Any exterior use requires a nonpermeable covering as well as location out of direct sun.

Photometal. An aluminum alloy electronically treated to produce a colored corrosion-resistant surface. Available in various shades of aluminum, bronze, and gold. Excellent longevity. Weather resistant and relatively vandal resistant.

Plexiglass. Common plexiglass with the screened image on the reverse side. Fairly scratch resistant, but does become brittle with age and will shatter on point impact. Best suited for interior use.

Polycarbonate. Also known as Lexan and Tuffak, this is a clear material with impact strength about 250 times stronger than glass. It is ultraviolet stabilized and is available in a full range of colors. Comes in standard sheet sizes and 0.75 and 0.125 millimeter (mm) thicknesses. Similar to plexiglass but softer and does not shatter on point impact. A matte velvet finish must be ordered as the gloss finish is very susceptible to scratching. Suitable for either interior or exterior use. The thinner mm (10–23 mm) can be used on Masonite, metal, fiberglass, or other

materials and is relatively inexpensive. Image is reverse silk-screened. Resolution of the graphics and text suffers slightly in comparison with fiberglass-embedment process but is considered a “star performer.”

Polyethelene. “Poly-Print” comes in 1/16- and 1/8-inch thicknesses. Durable and applicable to interior use. The low cost of this material makes it attractive for large multiple orders.

Porcelain enamel. Also known as Dura-Enamel and Enameltec. The process is a fired-on, opaque, glassy coating on metal. Infinite variety of colors as well as gloss, semi-gloss, pebbled, or mottled finish are available. Guaranteed for 25 years. Used for interior or exterior in high visitation areas. It is very weather resistant and vandal proof but is easily shattered by bullets or excessive impact. One of the most attractive sign materials on the market. Cost is competitive with the rising costs of embedded fiberglass or metal signs. Requires little or no maintenance.

Rigid vinyl. Material comes in 10, 20, and 30 mm thicknesses. Durable, but best used inside as exposure to the elements and ultraviolet rays tends to crack and warp it. Costs are low. Multiple colors can be used.

Screened sign board. Direct screen printing on a prepared medium density overlay (MDO sign board). Signs must be primed and finish coated with exterior enamel, then sent to a screen printer along with camera-ready artwork. Sign is ready to mount on uprights without having to be attached to a board.

9.4 Location and Placement

Location and placement of interpretive signs are critical to their effectiveness. Signs shall be installed at locations with sufficient visitor traffic to warrant a sign and placed in view of the feature being interpreted.

9.4.1 Location

Consider the following when selecting sign site location:

- (1) Suitability of the view and environment and how they may be maintained during construction, installation, and thereafter
- (2) Relationship of sign and the point of interest, with the point of interest obvious
- (3) Photographic value of setting
- (4) Suitable parking
- (5) Availability of restrooms, water, and power

- (6) Potential for vandalism
- (7) Aesthetics
- (8) Barrier-free accessibility

Probable locations may be:

- (1) Active management and research projects
- (2) Overlooks and viewpoints
- (3) Recreation facilities
- (4) Administrative sites
- (5) Unique natural features
- (6) Cultural sites (archaeological sites, historic areas, and facilities)
- (7) Areas where impacts are being caused by visitors

9.4.2 Placement

Consider the following in determining proper sign placement.

- (1) Sun and glare
- (2) Shadows
- (3) Orientation
- (4) Protective shelter needs
- (5) Traffic hazards (vehicle or foot)
- (6) Visitor safety including barrier-free access
- (7) Mounting height and angle (various factors are involved in this determination. For example, trail signs should be placed low, about hand level, convenient for both the wheelchair user and visually impaired visitors. Tilt sign at an angle of about 45° for ease in reading and rain runoff. Other signs designed to be read from a car, for example, may be more easily read with an angle of 90°).
- (8) Adverse effect of wind, insects, cold, heat, dust, bright sunlight, and other distracting elements to the forest visitor

- (9) The need to avoid danger or discomfort to forest visitors as they approach or stand at the sign, for example, overhanging or dead limbs, dangerous walks, rolling rock, cactus near the trail edge, or rough stones in the trail

9.5 Special Considerations

Design interpretive signs to provide for the needs of visitors with disabilities and foreign visitors who may have special needs. Consider the use of “curbside” information boards, cassette recordings, map or brochure dispensers, two-way communications systems (vehicle-to-information counters), or other information devices as feasible. Consult with subject area specialist on how best to provide these services.

9.5.1 Visitors With Disabilities

Most persons with vision impairments have some vision even if they are legally blind. It is important to remember that less than 10 percent of people with vision impairments read braille. Many persons choose to receive information by audio cassette, large or raised print, or oral presentations.

Do not set up signs or trails for the use of one specific group of people only, such as “braille trails” or “handicapped trails.” This assumes that people with disabilities need the protection of the special features, that there is nothing else in the site they would find interesting, and that there is nothing in the selected area of value to the general public. Another problem with this type of facility is that it requires visitors to identify themselves as being different from other visitors.

Do not make assumptions about what visitors would like or are capable of doing. Many people with vision impairments are denied opportunities for experiences such as scenic overlooks merely because someone assumed “they wouldn’t get much from the experience.” With appropriate description, a vision-impaired person can enjoy a scenic overlook just as much as a sighted person.

Tips:

- (1) For vision-impaired persons, essential information provided in print, either interpretive or orientational, should be available through the spoken word, audio tapes, large or raised print (at least 1/4 inch), and, perhaps, braille.
- (2) Important text and graphics should be viewable to all visitors.
- (3) For greatest readability, characters and symbols should contrast with their backgrounds—either light characters on a dark background or vice versa.

- (4) Self-guided trails should include such information as trail length, accessibility level, trail conditions, possible hazards, and cues for proper orientation. Interpretation should be as sensory as possible, for example, “Feel the soil in a shady area and compare it to soil in a sunny area.”
- (5) Where appropriate, nonvisual cues should be used to inform and direct vision impaired persons to signs. Tactile guidestrips may be located to assist in travel.
- (6) All pathways, ramps, aisles, and clearances should be accessible.
- (7) Railings and other barriers should be positioned so they provide an unobstructed view to persons in wheelchairs.

See the design guide *Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation* for additional guidance.

9.5.2 Bilingual Signing

Areas with heavy visitation by people whose predominant language is not English may need to consider bilingual signing. If duplicate interpretive signs, one in English and one in the desired language, are too costly and visually distracting, consider other alternatives such as developing an interpretive brochure in which text and graphics from the interpretive signs are translated into the desired second or third languages.

9.6 Evaluating/ Monitoring Effectiveness

Once the sign project is completed and installed, periodically monitor it and evaluate whether it is getting the message to the intended audience and how well it is satisfying their needs. Whether the project involves one sign for an historic lookout or a series of signs for an interpretive trail, the effectiveness of the interpretive sign (text, graphics, and total communication presentation) must be evaluated. Are objectives being met? Marketing research techniques for evaluating interpretive signs include in-house review, review by visitors, or review by experts. Again, consult with a service marketer if necessary. The communication effectiveness of proposed interpretive signs must be evaluated before fabrication, so that necessary changes can be made without incurring major costs.

To help evaluate an interpretive sign’s effectiveness, here are five criteria to consider:

Intriguing Will the sign excite interest and curiosity? Does it capture the visitor’s attention?

- Imaginative** Will it communicate in innovative ways, and does it stimulate new and different ideas and concepts? Does it encourage the visitor to look at familiar things in different ways?
- Involving** Will it invite or encourage visitor participation? Will it draw the visitor into personal contact with his or her surroundings and into becoming more than a spectator?
- Informative** Will it convey meaningful information, or new knowledge about the forest, its management, and its natural and cultural resources? Is it information the visitor needs to feel satisfied?
- Influential** Will it effect significant changes in visitor attitudes, or generate new ones?

9.7 For Further Information

- Heintzman, James. *Making the Right Connections: A Guide for Nature Writers*. Interpreter's Handbook Series. UW-SP Foundation Press, Inc., University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Stevens Point, WI 54481. 48 pp.
- National Association of Interpretation. *Journal of Interpretation*. Published quarterly. NIA, P.O. Box 1892, Fort Collins, CO 80522, (303) 491-6434.
- National Park Service. *Interpretation for Disabled Visitors in the National Park System*. 1982. 107 pp.
- Sharpe, Grant W. *Interpreting the Environment*. 1982. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 694 pp. See Chapters 11, 14, 16.
- US Army Corps of Engineers. *USCOE National Sign/Graphic Standards Manual, Interpretive Sign Standards Section*. 1990.
- USDA Forest Service, FSM 2390, Interpretive Services.
- USDA and USDI. *Design Guide for Accessible Outdoor Recreation. Interim Draft for Review, September 1990*.
- USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service. *Interpretive Design Guidelines*. 1983.

9.8 Interpretive Sign Examples

Following are examples of interpretive signs designed by various Federal agencies and comments about each.

Example 1 is one of a series of panels at a fish-viewing facility. Good use of illustrations to support text. Amount of text is just right for each segment. Good integration of management messages. Good use of header and subheaders. Overall, very attractive and easy to read.



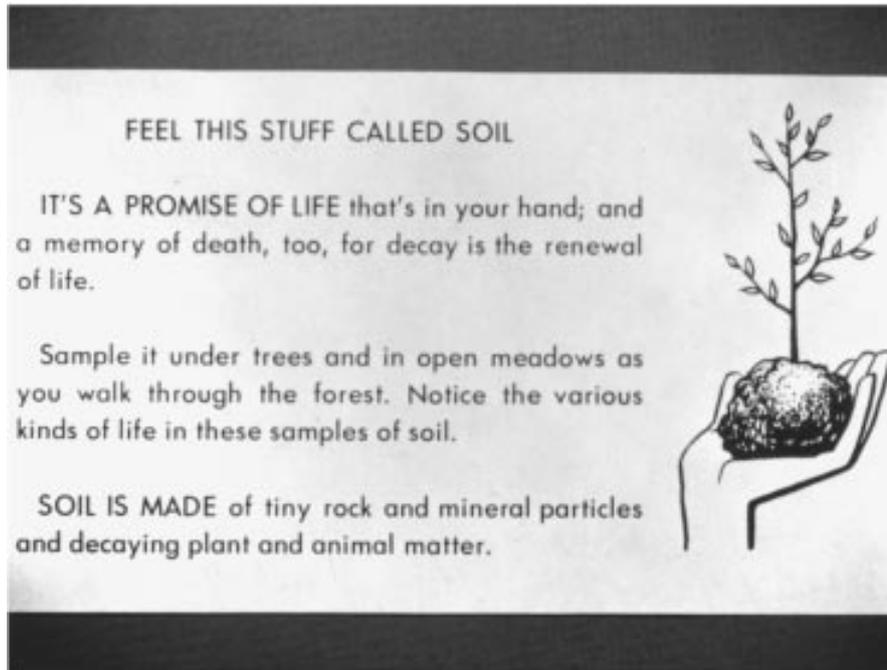
Example 1.—Salmon Values.

Example 2 is a sign located at the beginning of an interpretive trail. Illustration and title work together to highlight the theme of the trail. Map surrounded by white space sticks out; competes with the drawing for your eye. Better to leave background brown and to reverse out map or to continue the drawing to the left side and then drop in a small map. Note use of shield. Sign mounting is sturdy and fits with the environment.



Example 2.—Trail of Two Forests.

The layout, design, and illustration of the sign shown in Example 3 is weak and could be improved to be more eye-catching. The excellent part of this sign is its well-written interpretive text. The header immediately grabs the reader's attention and asks him or her to do something. The compelling text makes the reader want to reach down and grab a handful of dirt. Getting people involved is the essence of interpretation.



Example 3.—Feel This Stuff Called Soil.

Example 4 is a sign that addresses a management problem created by visitors. Rather than saying, “No walking through the meadow,” the message is conveyed by describing the results of an action. Text is well written. Design is striking; makes the visitor want to read it. Note that an abbreviated version of the message is given in four other languages on the right. If used as a stand-alone sign, should include the agency shield in the lower right-hand corner.



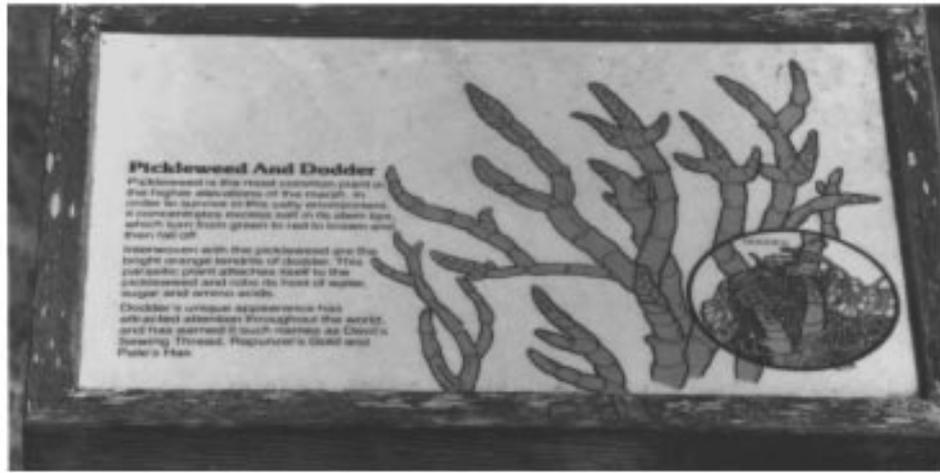
Example 4.—Meadow Damage.

Example 5 is one of a series of historical markers placed at various turnouts along a road. Historical panel is well designed, though a little wordy. The archaeological notice is inappropriately placed here; it makes the overall panel look too busy and dilutes the impact of the interpretive sign. A better solution might be to have a separate interpretive panel to address the subject of protecting our heritage. Shield and forest name should be smaller; they are larger than the sign header and compete with the subject of the interpretive sign. Since this is one of a series of historical markers, the hierarchy of emphasis might be on the words “Historical Marker,” next would be the interpretive topic, and last (and much smaller) would be the forest and agency identity.



Example 5.—Horse Camp.

Example 6 is a sign along an interpretive trail. Nice use of magnified inset drawing to show relationship of dodder and pickleweed. Text and header would be more interesting if written in an interpretive style. Column of text could have been narrower to balance better in the left-hand space. Header should be larger.



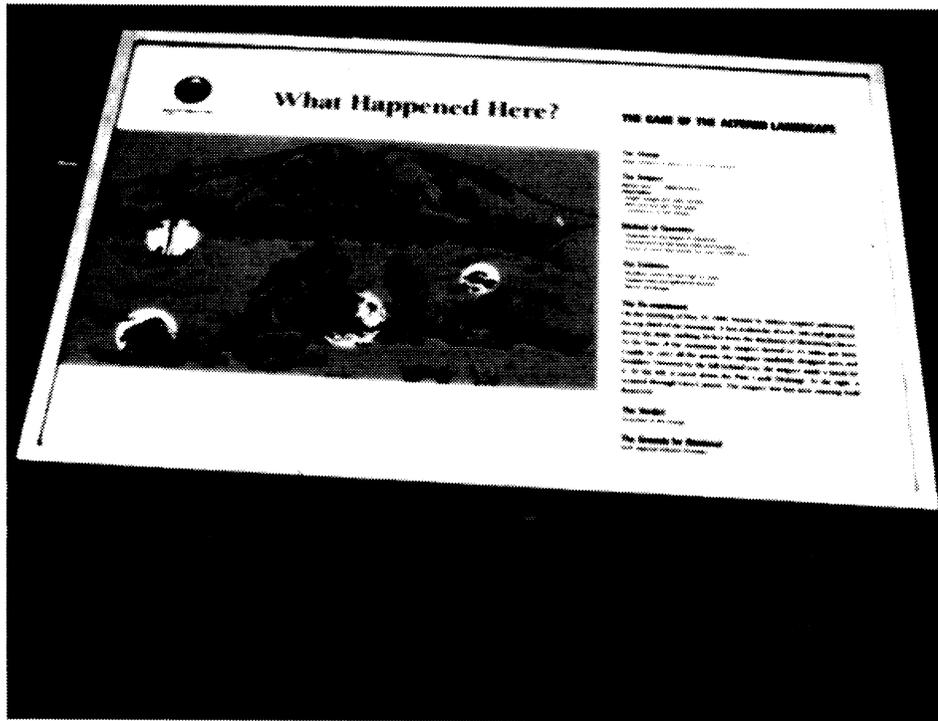
Example 6.—Pickleweed and Dodder.

Example 7 is one of a series of signs located on the patio surrounding a visitor center. Good use of a bold heading; easy to find subject of panel at a glance. Good balance of photos and text, though text seems a little long. However, the hierarchy of two levels of text breaks it up, and the larger type will be read first. If interest for more detail continues, the next level with smaller type will be read.



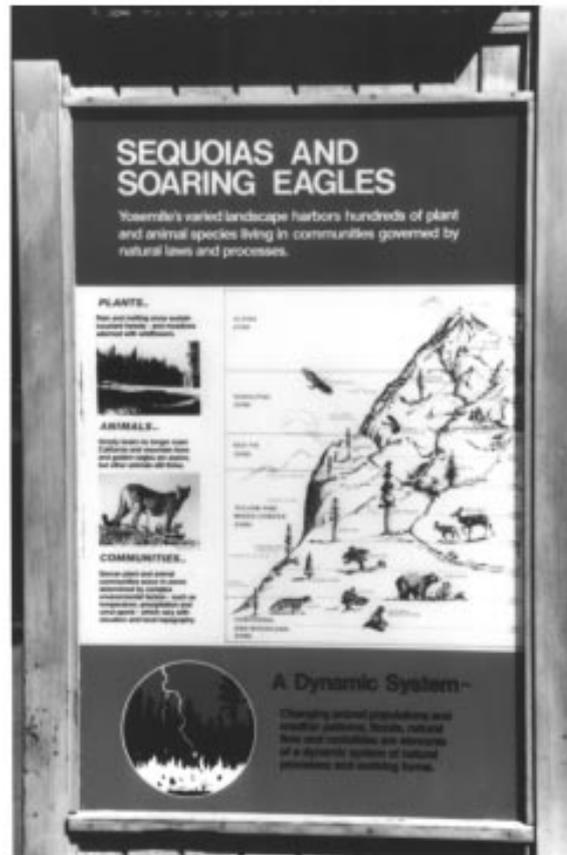
Example 7.—Insuring Tahoe's Future.

Example 8 is one of a series of panels. Nicely designed and balanced. Good use of header and subheaders. Easy to read without an excess of text.



Example 8.—What Happened Here?

Example 9 is one of a series of free-standing panels outside a visitor center entrance. Well-designed panel; clean and crisp. Good use of header and subheaders. Mostly a visual presentation with a minimal amount of text. The artwork and text work together to tell a story without an overabundance of words.



Example 9.—Sequoias and Soaring Eagles.
