

Appendix C - WCNF Revised Forest Plan Direction

The land area for this project is the Cache-Box Elder Management Area.

Forest-wide Goals and sub-goals related to the issues for winter recreation in this area are listed below:

Forestwide Goal 5-Road/Trail and Access Management

Provide a road and trail system that is safe, responsive to public and agency needs and desires, affordable and efficiently managed.

Provide an access system that minimizes negative ecological effects and is in balance with available funding. Focus on achieving an integrated transportation system that serves multiple functions and is consistent with desired future conditions for a given area.

5c. Provide a variety of opportunities for motorized access while avoiding or reducing undesirable social and resource impacts.

Forestwide Goal 6-Recreation

Manage for an array of recreation opportunities and settings to improve the quality of life for a variety of Forest recreation users.

Balance growth and expansion of recreation by managing within the capability of sustainable ecosystems found on the Forest for today and the future.

6e. Manage recreation use of undeveloped areas on the forest to provide for desirable opportunities while preventing or reducing resource impacts and social conflicts.

Forestwide Goal 8-Enforcement

Increase Forest Service field presence in key areas, improve effectiveness of public information on restrictions, and increase participation of individuals and organized groups in monitoring uses.

Additional Management Direction

The Forest Plan includes multiple map layers with accompanying definitions and management direction. The primary maps are Management Prescriptions (MP), Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), Winter Recreation (WR), and the Scenery Management System (SMS). Management Prescriptions define the primary land use allocation with the other three maps further defining intended management for a given land area. Of these four elements the most relevant to this project is the Winter Recreation map for the Cache Box Elder Management Area. Because ROS maps apply to non-snow season they are not relevant.

Management Prescriptions

The following management prescriptions apply to the project area.

2.2 Wild and Scenic Rivers: Scenic (2.2) Rivers include land corridors that extend 1/1/4 mile from each bank. Rivers and their corridors found suitable as additions to the Wild and Scenic Rivers System are managed to protect their free-flowing waters and existing or potential outstandingly remarkable values. Wasatch-Cache National Forest Plan Revision did not include Suitability determination. These Prescription numbers will not be used until such time as suitability work is completed, however eligible segments must be managed according to standards included in Appendix VIII of this Revised Forest Plan.

2.5 Scenic Byways: Manage Scenic Byways to protect and maintain their outstanding scenic quality. Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plans may be developed for designated Byways to further define desired conditions and tailor management direction.

(G2.5-3) Road building, new recreation development, and new trail construction are allowed for purposes of enhancing use and enjoyment of the scenic byway corridor, while maintaining or enhancing the scenic setting.

2.6 Undeveloped Areas: Manage to protect undeveloped landscapes in a manner other than formal recommended wilderness. Although other uses and activities may occur, the primary emphasis is protection to assure the values and unique qualities associated with undeveloped areas are recognized and preserved. No new developments or activity that would alter the landscape or character are allowed, however use of motorized equipment (such as chainsaws for trail clearing) is allowed.

(S2.6) Timber harvest, vegetation/fuel treatment, road construction, new recreation development, and new trail construction are not allowed.

(G2.6-1) Motorized uses, including snowmobiling, are allowed as shown on Winter Recreation and Travel Management Maps.

3.0 – Multiple Resource Uses Where Aquatic/Watershed and Terrestrial Habitat Integrity are Emphasized

3.1 Aquatic Habitat: Emphasis is on maintaining or improving quality of watershed conditions and aquatic habitats. Watershed function and aquatic habitat values are recognized as important and may require restoration to reach desired conditions. This prescription consists of the stream and adjacent riparian areas (or 300 feet either side of the stream whichever is greater).

(S3.1A-1) New recreation facility development is not allowed.

(G3.1A-3) Road construction is not allowed except for road crossings.

(G3.1A-4) New trail construction is allowed if consistent with site-specifically defined riparian management objectives.

4.0 – Multiple Resource Uses with Recreation Needs and Opportunities

This prescription includes lands managed with special consideration for General Forest Areas and Developed Recreation areas. Recreation needs and opportunities are emphasized in these areas. A wide spectrum of recreational settings may be provided. Winter recreation maps define where snowmobiling, heliskiing, and opportunities for non-motorized winter recreation activities occur.

4.4 Emphasis on Recreation Motorized Settings: These areas provide recreation opportunities within a range of semi-primitive to rural settings. Visitors may be able to obtain a moderate degree of solitude, but this prescription area provides opportunities for increased social interaction. Access to and within these areas is primarily through the use of motorized trails and roads. Management visibility is moderate to high with ranger patrols focusing on education, user ethics, and enforcement.

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Winter Recreation Allocation

The Wasatch-Cache National Forest is using Winter Recreation (WR) as a management tool to describe and allocate outdoor winter recreation areas. The WR system provides a way to help managers and recreation users understand where winter motorized recreation can occur; where areas are allocated for Heli-skiing; and where winter motorized use is not allowed. The classes below provide a description of each of the four WR classes applied to the Wasatch-Cache National Forest. There is no Heli-skiing designation in this management area, but the other three classes do apply.

The four classes mapped for Winter Recreation are:

- 1) **Non-motorized areas** – These areas emphasize non-motorized winter recreation such as x-country skiing, snow shoeing, etc., where no snowmobiles or other motorized uses are allowed.
- 2) **Motorized** – Snowmobiling is permitted in these areas and/or on designated routes. Non-motorized uses are also permitted here.
- 3) **Heli-skiing** – These areas allow heli-skiing (helicopter supported backcountry skiing); generally, there is no snowmobiling allowed in these areas unless otherwise noted. Other non-motorized uses are permitted.

The Winter Recreation Map allocation applies whenever more than 12” of non-compacted snow is present on the ground. When less than 12” of non-compacted snow is

present, summer ROS Maps and descriptions, as well as Travel Management Plans, apply and use of snowmobiles is not permitted.

Scenery Management System (SMS)

SMS is a guideline intended to assist managers and help the public understand the scenic resource management framework for project level decisions and larger area analyses. It is used as a management tool to describe, allocate and provide direction for arranging, planning, and designing landscape attributes relative to the appearance of places and expanses in outdoor settings.

The SMS allocations in the project area have a Landscape Character Theme of Natural Appearing with a High Scenic Integrity Objective. A corridor surrounding Logan Canyon Nation Scenic Byway (Highway 89) is mapped as Developed Natural Appearing with a High Scenic Integrity level.

For a Natural Appearing theme the existing landscape character has been influenced by both direct and indirect human activities, but appears natural to the majority of viewers. The High Scenic Integrity level would require that deviations from natural may be present, but due to the fact that alterations repeat the form, line, color, texture, and patterns of the natural landscape they are not evident.

Forestwide Standards and Guidelines

Water, wetlands and aquatic resources

(S2) Apply runoff controls during project implementation to prevent pollutants including fuels, sediment, oils, from reaching surface and groundwater

(G9) Avoid soil disturbing activities (those that remove surface organic matter exposing mineral soil) on steep, erosive, and unstable slopes, and in riparian, wetlands, floodplains, wet meadows, and alpine areas.

(G11) Use Best Management Practices and Soil and Water Conservation Practices during project level assessment and implementation to ensure maintenance of soil productivity, minimization of sediment discharge into streams, lakes and wetlands to protect of designated beneficial uses.

(G12) Locate new actions (such as incident bases, fire suppression camps, staging areas, livestock handling facilities, recreation facilities, roads and improvements including trails) outside of Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas. If the only suitable location for such actions is within Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas, sites will be located to minimize resource impacts.

Wildlife

(G29) Avoid disruptive management activities in elk calving areas, elk spring use areas, and bighorn sheep lambing areas from May 1 through June 30.

(G30) Avoid disruptive management activities (not public recreation activities) on deer, elk, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep winter range from November 15 through April 30.

(G43) Winter recreation uses may be closed or limited when one or more of the following conditions exist: Use affects key winter wildlife habitats, such as big game winter range, migration routes, or during wildlife stress periods such as during severe winters or special conditions such as TESCP species needs.

(G44) When constructing or reconstructing roads, trails, and facilities minimize potential effects on habitat of plant species at risk and key big game winter and spring ranges.

Road/Trail and Access Management

(S19) If the only access to National Forest requires crossing private land where public access is restricted, the adjacent National Forest land will be closed to motorized and mechanized use without a permit authorizing motorized use.

(G40) Limit uses on trails when necessary to protect resource values, resolve user conflicts, and/or create unique opportunities. Examples: Snow shoeing, snowboarding, hiking and/or dogs may be prohibited on groomed cross-country/skate ski and/or snowmobile routes to reduce track damage and/or user conflicts

(G41) Winter motorized and nonmotorized means of access may be separated in high use areas (in timing and/or location) where user conflicts and safety are a concern.

(G43) Winter recreation uses may be closed or limited when one or more of the following conditions exist:
Use causes significant impacts to adjacent landowners, and/or agencies from use that begins on national forest land.
Use affects water quality in municipal watershed areas.
Use affects key winter wildlife habitats, such as big game winter range, migration routes, or during wildlife stress periods such as during severe winters or special considerations such as species at risk needs.

(G44) When constructing and reconstructing roads, trails, and facilities minimize potential effects on habitat of species at risk and key big game winter and spring ranges.

(G45) Access routes for heavy equipment should be selected to limit disturbance to riparian vegetation and to limit the number of stream crossings.

Recreation Management:

- (G49) Manage recreation opportunities consistent with Management Prescriptions Categories (MPCs), Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Classes, Landscape Character Themes (LCTs), Scenic Integrity Objectives (SIOs), and in accordance with Winter Recreation Maps as well as District Travel Management Plans.
- (G52) Explore opportunities for separation of conflicting uses in time (for example alternating days) as well as space (closure of area to specific uses) to resolve conflicts while continuing to offer varied recreation opportunities.
- (G55) The Winter Recreation Map allocation applies whenever more than 12” of non-compacted snow is present on the ground. When less than 12” of non-compacted snow is present, summer ROS Maps and descriptions as well as Travel Management Plans apply and use of snowmobiles is not permitted.

Desired Condition for the Cache-Box Elder Management Area

The Forest Plan provided additional guidance for specific geographic areas within the forest. The following is relevant to the winter recreation issues.

“A variety of recreation opportunities and settings will be provided.”

“Opportunities for fall hunting and winter snowmobiling will continue to be popular activities.”

“Newly constructed recreation facilities will emphasize day use.”

“In the winter, parking for both motorized and non-motorized winter dispersed recreation use will be provided. Conflicts between these uses will be minimized through some separation of uses, clearly marked areas, user cooperation, and additional law enforcement. There will be some opportunities provided for non-motorized winter recreation in some locations outside Wilderness, in areas where motorized winter activities are not allowed.