

Limits of Acceptable Change: Forest Plan

How does the LAC process relate to the recently Revised Forest Plan?

The Land and Resource Management Plan provides management direction for the Daniel Boone National Forest. One of the objectives in the recently revised plan for the Red River Gorge area states that forest managers will use the **Limits of Acceptable Change process** to manage recreation use to mitigate unacceptable resource damage and crowding that can result from heavy recreational use.

What does the Revised Forest Plan say about the Red River Gorge area?

The Plan details Desired Future Conditions for the Forest and for different areas called Prescription Areas.

Prescription Areas are allocations of land with a similar emphasis (i.e. Wilderness, Clifflines). These areas can overlap. Use the more restrictive standard if two overlapping areas conflict.

There are 21 Prescription Areas on the Forest. Many of these 21 Prescriptions can be found in the Red River Gorge area. However, there are four primary Prescription Areas found in the Red River Gorge area:

1.C. CLIFFLINE COMMUNITY (100' from top of cliff to 200' below cliff)

Desired Future Condition

- **Emphasis of Condition:** This area is managed to protect, maintain, or enhance habitat conditions for cliffline associated PETS and Conservation species.
- **Desired Ecosystem Condition:** This area is managed to maintain its unique ecosystem and to support habitat for viable populations of the flora and fauna that are cliffline associated.
- **Desired Facilities and Human Activities:** The rich heritage resources occurring here are evaluated and protected, but institutional research is authorized only by written agreement. Dispersed recreation (e.g., hiking, rock climbing, rappelling, bouldering, and camping) is generally allowed, unless adverse impacts to PETS species, habitat for Conservation species, or heritage resources listed or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, cannot be mitigated.

1.K. HABITAT DIVERSITY EMPHASIS (much of Indian Creek area)

Desired Future Condition

- **Emphasis of Condition:** This area is managed for the purpose of maintaining biodiversity. Various management techniques are utilized to maintain this area in a variety of habitat conditions, not necessarily supported or found in other Prescription Areas.
- **Desired Ecosystem Conditions:** This Prescription Area consists of a mixture of habitat conditions that provide a desired diversity of communities. Temporary forest openings are created by the removal and/or death of single trees, groups of trees (up to 1/4 acre), and/or stands of trees (up to 40 acres). Occasional uncontrolled events such as weather, wildland fire, insects, or disease may result in large areas returning to young age forest habitat. Some permanent openings in grassy, forb or brush condition also are maintained in this Prescription Area. Many of these include some type of pond.
- **Desired Facilities and Human Activities:** A well-designed and maintained road system provides access for resource protection and management. Interpretive signs are maintained in a number of areas easily reached by visitors to explain past and current activities and events. Well-maintained trails are present that are compatible with habitat conditions. Hunting occurs seasonally.

2.A. CLIFTY WILDERNESS (12,646 acres)

Desired Future Condition

- **Emphasis of Condition:** This is a primitive place where natural ecological succession is allowed to operate freely to the extent feasible.
- **Desired Ecosystem Conditions:** Mostly late-successional and old-growth forests characterize the area including many areas of white pine and hemlock.
- **Desired Facilities and Human Activities:** Dispersed recreation occurs, but evidence of other humans is not easily detected. An occasional visitor might be found hiking, hunting, fishing, or camping. There are a few primitive trails, maintained primarily to disperse use and minimize user impacts, not for visitor convenience.

3.E. RED RIVER GORGE GEOLOGICAL AREA (29,298 acres)

Desired Future Condition

- **Emphasis of Condition:** Natural ecological processes and conditions dominate, but some human influence, primarily dispersed outdoor recreation, commonly occurs.
- **Desired Ecosystem Condition:** This area provides a natural appearing, mid- to late-successional, old-aged forest environment interspersed with clifflines and rock arches.
- **Desired Facility and Human Activities:** Dispersed recreation in addition to environmental and heritage education are major emphases for this area. Several trails, trailheads, and a few roads are managed to provide access. In places, ample opportunities

to interact with others exist. For most of the area, however, there are opportunities for solitude. Most types of outdoor recreation activities and wildlife enhancements occur where negative impacts to natural resources and forest visitors can be mitigated or controlled through regulation, facility design and operation, or other management.

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