

WORKING TOGETHER

Seeking to preserve wilderness character by working on Wilderness Stewardship Performance is more than the Forest Service can accomplish alone. The Forest Service is developing partnerships with local and national groups concerned with the health of the wilderness resource. You can help support these partnerships in many ways:

- Join a trail restoration work project.
- Volunteer to survey and remove invasive species.
- Become part of a team educating others about wilderness.
- Learn new skills while inventorying recreation campsites.
- Contribute to wilderness stewardship by analyzing data about wilderness character.

▼ *Mount Jefferson Wilderness, Oregon. Photo courtesy of Adrian Klein.*



**JOIN US FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO
MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LEGACY WE
WILL GIVE TO FUTURE GENERATIONS.**



▲ *Flatside Wilderness, Ouachita National Forest, Arkansas. Photo courtesy of Laura Vu.*



Visit <http://www.wilderness.net>

or

contact your local Forest Service office.

► *Cover photo: Three Sisters Wilderness, Oregon. Photo courtesy of George Wuertner.*

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United States Department of Agriculture



WILDERNESS

STEWARDSHIP PERFORMANCE



Forest Service

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PRESERVING WILDERNESS CHARACTER

Signed in 1964, the Wilderness Act was landmark legislation that set aside 9 million acres of wilderness for the enjoyment of present and future generations and established the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Now, four Federal land management agencies manage more than 109 million acres of designated wilderness. Managing more than 37 million acres in more than 445 units of the National Wilderness Preservation System, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service is responsible for more wilderness areas than all of the other Federal land management agencies combined.

To ensure that these wilderness areas stay wild forever, the Forest Service has identified key elements that help define successful wilderness stewardship based on the Wilderness Act. These elements combine the essential qualities of wilderness character.

Not all wilderness areas managed by the Forest Service meet the minimum stewardship level – defined as achieving success in the key elements for wilderness stewardship. Successfully meeting these key elements is the ultimate goal to assure preservation of wilderness character.

ESTABLISHING WILDERNESS STEWARDSHIP PERFORMANCE

The Forest Service’s primary responsibility under the Wilderness Act is to preserve wilderness character. The Wilderness Stewardship Performance framework will track how well the agency meets baseline performance elements for preserving wilderness character by tracking the number of wilderness areas meeting these elements.

This performance framework improves upon previous measurement efforts through linkages to wilderness character monitoring. This new approach allows flexibility in the selection of individual elements to reflect local wilderness stewardship priorities. The framework seeks to foster improved integration and communication between program areas and to accurately reflect the collaboration required to steward Forest Service wilderness resources (which accounts for nearly one-fifth of all National Forest System acres).

SELECTING WILDERNESS STEWARDSHIP PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS

To implement the framework, national forests that manage wilderness areas should follow the following guidelines:

- Select 10 elements for each wilderness and report on them annually.
- Score each of the 10 selected elements with a score of up to 10 points for a total of 100 points.
- Note that a wilderness scoring 60 points or higher will equate to “Wilderness meeting baseline performance for preserving wilderness character.”
- Include the four mandatory elements:
 - Agency Management Action
 - Workforce Capacity
 - Education
 - Wilderness Character Baseline
- Match local stewardship priorities in the selection of the other six elements.
- Use an interdisciplinary approach in the selection of elements.
- When a wilderness is shared across forests, work collaboratively.

Quality	Element Title	Selection
Natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invasive Species • Air Quality Values • Natural Role of Fire • Water • Fish and Wildlife • Plants 	Select 1-3
Undeveloped	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation Sites • Motorized Equipment Mechanical Transport Use Authorizations • Trails • Noncompliant Infrastructure 	Select 1-2
Untrammeled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency Management Actions 	Must Select
Solitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation • Opportunities for Solitude 	Select 1-2
Other Features of Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Resources 	Select 0-1
Special Provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livestock Grazing • Outfitters and Guides • Other Special Provisions (e.g., dams, airstrips, mines) 	Select 0-2
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Capacity • Education • Wilderness Character Baseline 	Must Select All

Note: Although units must select a total of 10 elements, they may select additional elements for monitoring use only.

▼ *Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, Minnesota. Photo courtesy of Dawn M. LaPointe.*

