CHAPTER 3

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 defines management prescriptions (MRx) to be applied for various types of areas on the forests. Management prescriptions include desired conditions, standards, and goals that are specific to each forest type. Forestwide goals, objectives, and standards are defined in Chapter 2, *Forestwide Direction*.

The lands assigned to the various prescriptions have different attributes that require a slightly different management emphasis. These differences are reflected in the management prescriptions applied to each area. Management prescriptions related to one another are grouped in "categories," numbered 0 through 12. The numbering system and emphasis of each management prescription is consistent across the national forests of the southern Appalachians. This chapter only includes management prescriptions used in the Revised Forest Plan; therefore, there are gaps in the numbering sequence. A complete list of management prescriptions used throughout the southern Appalachians, along with their related emphasis, is available in the planning process record files.

PRESCRIPTION FORMAT

Each management prescription includes:

Number and Name of the Prescription – tells the primary focus of management.
Emphasis – briefly describes the focus and general management direction for the area.
Desired Condition - shows opportunities and/or conditions available in the future for all the multiple uses and resources found throughout the prescription area.
Goals – statement of a condition desired to be created or maintained for the future. Goals occur in some prescriptions, but not all.
Objectives – measurable activities designed to achieve one or more goals, which may be forestwide or specific to the prescription.
Standards - management direction that applies to a particular area or activity.

There is high degree of consistency in prescription names and numbers among the five Southern Appalachian Forests but they are not identical. For example, the 3.C. MRx is a "National Scenic Area." The Chattoohoochee-Oconee NF has only one such area, so the name becomes "Coosa Bald National Scenic Area."

Management prescription emphasis statements describe the primary resource emphasis on a landscape more specific than the forest as a whole. Provisions are made for various resources at differing levels. Emphasis statements are similar to goal statements in tone and function.

PRESCRIPTION FORMAT

USE OF GIS

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION ALLOCATIONS

Each desired condition section includes a description of the landscape alterations, forest appearance, associated wildlife, and possible human experiences and interactions. The desired condition is a word picture of resources, conditions and types of activities *as if all applicable goals and objectives have been met.* The desired condition is not a description of what existed on the area at the time the management prescription was written. Statements within these sections are not objectives or standards, even though they have similar ideas and may use similar words.

Goal statements, if they occur, have a narrower focus than the complementary forestwide goal statement. For example, a forestwide recreation goal covers the entire range of recreation opportunities offered on the Forest. But a Wilderness recreation goal within the Designated or Recommended Wilderness would refer to only the narrow segment of primitive or semi-primitive recreation appropriate to that prescription.

Standards, like the forestwide standards, are mandatory compliance requirements. They may be a new standard not referred to in the forestwide set. More often they are a greater constraint of a similar forestwide standard. For example, a forestwide standard may say OHV use is confined to trails only. But an individual management prescription standard may say no OHV trails will occur within that prescription area. The combination of forestwide standards and management prescription standards provide the overall direction for a specific landscape.

USE OF GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

There are two possible sources for National Forest System lands acreage figures. One is the Lands staff records with acreages generated from deeds and land surveys. These are the 'official' acres for legal purposes. The other is digitized Geographic Information System (GIS) data, maintained as data 'layers.' Two important layers we used extensively are the 'surface ownership,' a digitized coverage of National Forest lands, and a 'stands' layer of vegetation community polygons. As these and other data layers are related through the GIS, the correlation is typically less than perfect, resulting in 'slivers' where lines are not strictly coincident. Depending upon the importance of stronger correlation, extensive work went into minimizing this 'sliver' challenge. Two examples were 'cutting' stand polygons to be coincident with designated Wild and Scenic River boundaries and with inventoried roadless area boundaries. But an absolute match between GIS and Lands acreages would have been very labor intensive, and was not necessary. The GIS data and the Lands data were correlated to a much less than 1 percent difference in the total acres of each of the Chattahoochee and Oconee as of September 2003. Unless otherwise identified, acreage figures used throughout this document were generated from GIS data. In most cases, the acreage figures represent a summation from individual stand polygons. Our intention was to attribute every table with the data source to avoid confusion.

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION ALLOCATIONS

The remainder of this chapter comprises a listing of the management prescriptions applied to the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests. Table 3- 1 shows the total acres allocated to each MRx. The riparian management prescription (MRx 11) is ‘embedded’ within each of the other management prescriptions; it does not stand alone, and has no allocated acres. The riparian prescription must be considered whenever any of the other management prescriptions are to be implemented at the project/site specific level. The acreage devoted to individual communication sites (MRx 5.A) is very small, and in some cases is included with administrative sites.

Table 3- 1. Management Prescription Acreage

MRx	MRx Title	Chattahoochee Acres	Oconee Acres	Total Acres
0.B	Custodial Management - Small, Isolated Land Areas (to be disposed of or exchanged)	1,929	142	2,071
1.A	Designated Wilderness Areas	117,436	0	117,436
1.B	Recommended Wilderness Study Areas	8,094	0	8,094
2.A.1	Designated Wild River Segments	5,998	0	5,998
2.A.2	Designated Scenic River Segments	468	0	468
2.A.3	Designated Recreational River Segments	1,551	0	1,551
2.B.1	Recommended Wild River Segments	2,120	0	2,570
2.B.2	Recommended Scenic River Segments	524	4,854	5,378
2.B.3	Recommended Recreational River Segments	423	0	423
3.A	National Scenic Area	7,122	0	7,122
3.B	Experimental Forests	0	9,364	9,597
3.C	National Recreation Areas	23,660	0	23,647
3.D	Proposed National Recreational Areas	2,029	0	2,030
4.A	Appalachian National Scenic Trail Corridor	16,655	0	16,868
4.B.1	Murder Creek Research Natural Area	0	1,005	1,005
4.D	Botanical - Zoological Areas	3,363	1,215	4,578
4.E.1	Cultural/Heritage Areas	191	111	302
4.F	Scenic Areas	18,129	0	21,125
4.F.1	Scenic and Wildlife Management Areas	18,426	0	19,876
4.F.2	Regional Forester Designated Scenic Areas (Pre-1985)	4,797	0	4,725
4.H	Forest-Designated Outstandingly Remarkable Streams	17,868	4,730	22,598
4.I	Natural Areas - Few Open Roads	17,943	0	17,903
5.A	Administrative Sites	163	102	265
5.B	Communication Sites	48	0	48
5.D	Military-Use Areas (Camp Merrill)	144	0	144
6.B	Areas Managed to Restore or Maintain Old-Growth Characteristics	28,059	1,617	29,676

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MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION ALLOCATIONS

MRx	MRx Title	Chattahoochee Acres	Oconee Acres	Total Acres
6.D	Core Areas of Old-Growth Surrounded by Areas with Extended Forest Rotations	598	0	598
7.A	Scenic Byway Corridor	12,431	0	2,037
7.B	Scenic Corridors and Sensitive Viewsheds	16,586	0	16,992
7.E.1	Dispersed Recreation Areas	74,277	985	75,262
7.E.2	Dispersed Recreation Areas with Vegetation Management	22,455	8,383	30,838
8.A.1	Mix of Successional Forest Habitats	68,323	0	68,323
8.A.2	Forest Interior, Mid- to Late-Successional Forest Habitats	23,693	0	26,730
8.D	Red-cockaded Woodpecker Habitat	0	31,438	31,412
8.D.1	Red-cockaded Woodpecker Sub-habitat Management Areas	0	15,670	15,848
8.E.3	High-Elevation, Early-Successional Habitat	6,604	0	6,875
9.A.1	Source Water Protection Watersheds	9,325	0	10,127
9.A.3	Watershed Restoration Areas	17,854	0	17,767
9.F	Rare Communities	505	593	1098
9.H	Management, Maintenance, and Restoration of Plant Associations to Their Ecological Potential	172,718	35,006	207,724
11	Riparian Corridors	N/A	N/A	N/A
12.A	Remote Backcountry Recreation - Few Open Roads	28,261	0	28,256
	Totals	750,770	115,215	865,985

0.B CUSTODIAL MANAGEMENT - SMALL, ISOLATED LAND AREAS

EMPHASIS

These areas would be managed at a minimum level prior to disposal or land exchange. No expenditures would be involved except those required by law or to protect human health or safety. No resource would be emphasized.

DESIRED CONDITION

These areas would be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests, with little to no human-caused forest openings. Small gaps and occasional large openings of early-successcional forest habitat may be created through natural disturbances.

Natural processes would periodically remove the canopy and result in large and small areas of young and small trees. The average area affected would be about 2 to 3 percent per decade of all the land area managed under a minimum level. The range of canopy breaks includes the common occurrence of small gaps created by individual tree mortality, to frequent insect- or disease-killed groups up to approximately one hundred acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas up to several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

The landscape character is natural appearing, moving toward natural evolving with natural processes as the only agents of change. Natural change is assumed to be visually acceptable and no active management is directed at moderating visual contrasts. Evidence of human intervention in the landscape is very limited, and would be unseen by most visitors.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be maintained. In some cases, existing openings may be obliterated through tree planting and elimination of nonnative species. New permanent wildlife openings are not created. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. System road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

These areas are generally surrounded by private lands and not accessible by the general public. There are no developed or dispersed recreation opportunities. The landscape character would be natural appearing. No habitat associations are emphasized. No visitor information is provided to create any specific expectation of amenities. Signs are very limited. Visitors are expected to be rather skilled in the outdoors, self-reliant and well prepared. No monitoring of visitor satisfaction or expectation occurs.

There are no wildlife habitat objectives for this prescription. Wildlife habitats are characterized by nearly unbroken tree canopy and old forest. Canopy removal occurs by natural events on about 2 to 3 percent of area per decade. Forest succession, as a result of natural changes, is gradually moving composition toward species such as white pine, hemlock, beech, rhododendron, mountain laurel, red maple, sourwood, and blackgum. Large downed woody material, standing snags, and tree cavities are on a trend of increase. High-quality early-successional habitat rarely occurs, and then usually as a result of a combination of tree mortality followed by wildfire.

Streams and water bodies are not managed except in cases where aquatic systems need protection or restoration. Examples include an invasion of a nonnative aquatic organism or natural events such as floods, tree mortality, blow-down, or mass soil failures that block channels. Streams or water bodies are not regularly inventoried or monitored, unless needed on a sample basis to improve the characterization of larger scale conditions or trends, or if a known T&E species occurs.

Surveys to find PETS species are not conducted except in response to a report of occurrence or project proposals such as land exchange. Once discovered, locations of T&E species populations are geo-referenced as a point and monitored. Data collected is very basic, and monitoring may not occur annually. (Land with PETS species is kept in National Forest ownership, therefore the discovery of PETS may cause the area to change to a different MRx.) Management actions are taken only if needed to protect the continued existence of known T&E populations and only with USFWS concurrence. Where active management is used, informally documented monitoring and reporting of response is done. Management generally does not occur for either Proposed or Sensitive species. Visitor controls are not used.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

0.B-001 Land expenditures are allowed in order to dispose of isolated tracts of land.

0.B-002 New utility corridor or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

0.B-003 Timing, controlled use, and no-surface occupancy stipulations will be used on an as-needed basis. Mineral material authorizations for local, State, and other Federal agencies are permitted for public health, safety, and emergencies. Commercial use of mineral materials is permitted, provided that fees for these uses are adequate to recover administration costs.

Vegetation and Forest Health

0.B-004 In general, investments in forest health will not be made. However, insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled where threatened, endangered, proposed, sensitive, or locally rare species and their habitats may be adversely impacted; to prevent damage to resources on adjacent land; or where needed for safety or legal reasons.

0.B-005 Biological control methods, where available and effective, are the preferred methods for management.

0.B-006 Eradication of newly discovered nonnative pests may be considered.

0.B-007 Biological control of nonnative pests through the release of natural enemies may be considered.

0.B-008 Salvage timber may be removed after catastrophe if needed for safety or legal reasons. Actions need to be consistent with Forest Service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and SPB EIS.

Fire Management

0.B-009 Prescribed fire will not be used as a management tool.

0.B-010 Wildfires will always be suppressed.

Recreation

0.B-011 Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Settings would be SPNM, RN2, and RN1.

0.B-012 These areas would be closed to OHV use.

Scenery

0.B-013 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which may vary by inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH	H	H

Facilities, Roads, and Access

0.B-014 Road construction is prohibited, subject to valid existing rights or leases. Decommission roads that are not needed and are adversely affecting surrounding resource values and conditions.

Timber Management

0.B-015 These lands are classified as unsuitable for timber production, not appropriate, under the NFMA; however, salvage sales, sales to protect other multiple use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

1.A DESIGNATED WILDERNESS AREAS

The Congressionally-designated wilderness areas on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests and their GIS acreage at the time of publication of this Plan are listed below. All these areas are on the Chattahoochee NF.

Designated Wilderness Area	Acres
Big Frog	83
Cohutta	35,233
Ellicott Rock	2,073
Southern Nantahala	12,949
Raven Cliffs	9,113
Brasstown	12,949
Tray Mountain	10,414
Rich Mountain	10,343
Blood Mountain	7,800
Mark Trail	16,880

EMPHASIS

Allow ecological and biological processes to progress naturally with little to no human influence or intervention. Minimum impacts made by those who seek the wilderness as a special place offering opportunities to experience solitude and risk in as primitive surroundings as possible may occur.

DESIRED CONDITION

The natural evolving landscape character in wilderness expresses the natural evolution of biophysical features and processes with very limited human intervention. The forest cover is primarily older forests with a continuous canopy, except for occasional gaps created by natural occurrences such as storms, insect or disease outbreak, and fire. Vegetation management is limited to trail clearing with hand tools. Natural ignition fires are permitted to play a natural role when weather, terrain, and external values at risk permit. Management of the area is focused on protecting and preserving the natural environment, natural processes, and heritage properties from human influences. Soil and water restorations in the form of rerouting trails or preventing camping along streams are encouraged. Recreation management is designed to provide solitude and remoteness in the most primitive and natural recreation setting possible. As Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) management findings occur for each designated wilderness, those standards will be adopted and monitored for compliance.

These areas would be characterized by 88 to 96 percent of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests, with little to no human-caused forest openings. Of this amount, mid-successional forest occurs on approximately 8 percent. Old-growth forest communities would increase over the decades, except where significant natural disturbances occur. Natural processes such as ice storms or windstorms, insects, diseases, and lightening fires are the primary influences to vegetation. These processes would periodically remove the canopy and result in large and small areas of young and small trees. The average aggregate area affected would be

about 2 to 3 percent per decade. The range of canopy breaks includes the common occurrence of small gaps created by individual tree mortality, to frequent insect or disease-killed groups up to approximately one hundred acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas up to several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife are not maintained, but are allowed to succeed to forest. New permanent wildlife openings are not created.

These areas have a Scenic Integrity Objective of Very High, which generally provides for ecological change only. Natural change is assumed to be visually acceptable and no active management is directed at moderating visual contrasts. Evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is minimal and would normally be overlooked by most visitors. Human-caused change may be specifically mitigated to be made less obvious.

Wilderness has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Areas are managed for Primitive ROS except for those areas that have LAC management direction, even if the area does not meet inventory criteria. The recreation use emphasis is on dispersed activities such as hunting, fishing, or hiking, but localized and limited development that facilitates those uses may be located adjacent to the area. Wilderness may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historic value.

Most visitor information is dispensed outside of the wilderness at trailheads and through off-site public information and education efforts. Wilderness visitors are encouraged to "pack-it-in and pack-it-out" and to "leave no trace." Signs are very limited. Visitors are expected to be rather skilled in the outdoors, self-reliant and well prepared. Visitors' expectations and satisfaction will be monitored. Search and rescue or recovery is not readily available and motorized operations are constrained by decisions made by appropriate authority level.

Few facilities are provided. Permanent, human-made shelters are present if they existed prior to wilderness designation, particularly along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Construction of new shelters and primitive privies at new locations within wilderness is not allowed unless there is a need to protect natural resources from impacts of human visitors. Structures such as signs or bridges for the comfort or convenience of visitors in wilderness are minimal or may not exist. The information structures appearing in wilderness are generally for the protection of resources, visitors, or where present prior to wilderness designation. Forest designated trails in wilderness lie lightly on the land (typically narrow footpaths or horse trails) and have directional signing that blends with natural surroundings. Access to the area is limited. Only exterior boundary roads occur. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Trailheads at surrounding roads are designed with sensitivity to scale and character to set the tone for experiencing a primitive recreation experience.

Travel and recreation within wilderness is strictly non-motorized. Although open roads may serve as boundaries to the area, its interior includes no open roads. Human access is by non-motorized means only.

Facilities are typically trails. Structures are rare. Existing facilities are maintained in serviceable condition with the emphasis on resource protection. They are not improved beyond their original design. In these areas, no new facilities are provided. The Appalachian National Scenic Trail is located within the Blood Mountain, Tray Mountain, Raven Cliffs, Mark Trail, and Southern Nantahala wildernesses. Wilderness management takes precedance over A.T. MRx 4.A., but is sensitive to its standards and emphasis. Refer to the 4.A. standards.

There are no wildlife habitat objectives for this prescription. Wildlife habitats are characterized by nearly unbroken tree canopy and old forest. Canopy removal occurs by natural events on about 2 to 3 percent of area per decade. Forest succession as a result of natural changes is gradually moving composition toward more tolerant species such as white pine, hemlock, beech, rhododendron, mountain laurel, red maple, sourwood, and blackgum. Large downed woody material, standing snags, and tree cavities are on a trend of increase. High-quality early-successional habitat rarely occurs and then usually as a result of a combination of tree mortality followed by wildfire.

Wilderness serves as a baseline or reference condition for natural ecological change as compared to ecosystems more recently modified by human use. Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Streams are periodically inventoried and monitored as needed to establish baseline or reference conditions or to monitor known T&E species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Research involving little or no specimen collection occurs on a special project basis. Minimal management to maintain habitat of known populations of T&E may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. Priority of heritage resource inventory areas within thewilderness will focus on areas of popular use such as trails and campsites, probability of containing significant heritage resources, and known heritage resources. Future heritage resource management will be determined during the development of wilderness plans.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

1.A-001 Private lands within and adjacent to wilderness will be high priority for acquisition when such acquisition would improve the manageability of the wilderness.

1.A-002 Private land trusts adjacent to wilderness boundaries will be encouraged.

1.A-003 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas.

1.A-004 Other special uses such as outfitter/guide permits, may be authorized, if consistent and compatible with the goals and objectives of these areas.

Minerals and Geology

1.A-005 Federal mineral leases and mineral material authorizations would not be allowed, unless provided for in the designating legislation.

1.A-006 Information gathering activities that involve only very minor surface disturbance and are compatible with the wilderness environment are permissible by permit from the Forest Supervisor.

1.A-007 Private mineral rights underneath National Forest surface ownership will be a priority for acquisition through exchange or donation

Vegetation and Forest Health

1.A-008 Native insect and diseases are not controlled, unless epidemics are expected to cause unacceptable damage to adjacent lands and resources and then only after appropriate approvals per the agencies implementing regulations of the Wilderness Act of 1964 and applicable amendments.

1.A-009 Nonnative invasive pests are controlled, if expected to cause an unnatural loss to the wilderness resource.

1.A-010 Noxious weeds may be eradicated by physical means such as grubbing when the infestations are isolated, and hand-applied chemicals may be used when absolutely necessary.

1.A-011 Apply the current *Minimum Requirement Decision Guide* to wilderness management activities.

Fire Management

1.A-012 Use suppression methods with the least detriment to wilderness, unless the fire is threatening public safety within the wilderness or resources and property outside the wilderness.

1.A-013 Management-ignited prescribed fire can be used in wilderness only as provided for in FSM 2324.2.

1.A-014 Natural ignition fires may be managed in wilderness to allow fires to play, as nearly as possible, their natural ecological role, as long as the applicable documentation has been prepared and approved.

1.A-015 Emphasize Minimum Impact Suppression Techniques (MIST) when suppressing wildfires in wilderness.

1.A-016 Use of motorized equipment in Wilderness will comply with FSM 2326. Regional Forester approval is required for the use of tractors in fire suppression. The Forest Supervisor may approve the use of limited mechanized equipment in Wilderness in instances of 'inescapable urgency and temporary need for speed beyond that available by primitive means.'

Recreation

1.A-017 ROS settings will be managed for Primitive ROS class, except for those areas that have Limits of Acceptable Change management direction.

1.A-018 Design, construct, reconstruct, and maintain trails to the minimum standard necessary to minimize or prevent resource damage and protect the safety of wilderness users. Trails will appear to be part of the wilderness environment and not an intrusion upon it.

1.A-019 **Appalachian National Scenic Trail**: The following standards apply to the Appalachian Trail within designated Wilderness. See MRx 4.A.

A. Use of hand-held power tools, like chainsaws, to reopen trails following catastrophic natural events may be authorized by the Regional Forester.
B. Along the A.T. corridor, activities will be planned and carried out in cooperation with the appropriate A.T. management partner(s).
C. Horses and packstock are prohibited on the footpath of the A.T.
D. Existing A.T. shelters and associated facilities may be maintained.
E. Blazing is allowed on the Appalachian Trail.
F. Construct, relocate, and maintain the A.T. to the minimum standard necessary for protection of the soil, water, vegetation, visual quality, user safety, and long-term maintenance. Emphasize trails that appear to be part of the wilderness environment and not an intrusion upon it.
G. When existing trail shelters deteriorate to the point that they must be replaced or reconstructed, analyze the shelter location. When possible, relocate shelters to appropriate sites outside of Wilderness.

1.A-020 This area is closed to OHV use.

1.A-021 For the Ellicott Rock Wilderness, group camping size is limited to 12 people.

1.A-022 Apply visitor controls such as permitting, restrictions in party size, closure of portions of the Wilderness to camping, or similar measure as necessary to protect wilderness values

Scenery

1.A-023 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH

Facilities, Roads, and Access

1.A-024 Motorized access is prohibited.

1.A-025 Construction of roads or trails for motorized use is prohibited. Only exterior boundary roads occur.

1.A-026 Development of improvements will be in compliance with an approved wilderness plan.

Timber Management

1.A-027 These lands are classified as unsuitable for timber production, withdrawn by Congress.

Fish and Wildlife

1.A-028 Fish stocking by non-motorized means to restore native species is permitted.

1.A-029 Stocking of nonnative fish by non-motorized means may be permissible provided that (1) stocking traditionally occurred before wilderness designation, and (2) the species is likely to survive and spawn.

1.B RECOMMENDED WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

1.B RECOMMENDED WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

Areas to be recommended to Congress for designation as wilderness areas are:

Ben Gap
Cedar Mountain
Duck Branch
Ellicott Rock (extension)
Foster Branch
Helton Creek
Ken Mountain
Shoal Branch
Tate Branch
Tripp Branch
Wilson Cove

EMPHASIS

The focus would be on managing these areas to protect wilderness characteristics pending legislation as to their classification, and providing for existing uses where compatible with protecting wilderness character.

These areas would be managed at an overall minimum level (very low intensity) to keep Federal expenditures low and to provide remote, dispersed recreation opportunities. No expenditures will be involved except those required by law, to protect human health and safety, or to correct resource damage conditions. No resource would be emphasized.

DESIRED CONDITION

These areas would be managed similarly to MRx 1.A. Roadless characteristics are enhanced. Begin to decommission and/or close open roads. This type management is to continue until Congress decides whether or not to include the area in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

These areas will be characterized by mid- to late-successional forests, with little to no human-caused forest openings. Many small gaps and occasional large openings of early-successcional forest habitat may be created through natural disturbances.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests, with little to no human-caused forest openings. Natural processes such as ice storms or windstorms, insects, diseases, and lightening fires are the primary influences to vegetation. These processes will periodically remove the canopy and result in large and small areas of young and small trees. It is estimated an average area affected will be approximately 2 to 3 percent per decade of the land area managed as wilderness. The range of canopy breaks includes the common occurrence of small gaps created by individual tree mortality, to frequent insect or disease-killed groups up to approximately one hundred acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas up to several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife are not maintained, but are allowed to succeed to forest. New permanent wildlife openings are not created.

The landscape character is natural evolving with natural processes the only agents of change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural change is assumed to be visually acceptable and no active management is directed at moderating visual contrasts. The naturally evolving landscape character expresses the natural evolution of biophysical features and processes, with very limited human intervention. Human-caused

change may be specifically mitigated to be made less obvious. The SIO of Very High generally provides for ecological change only.

The recreation use emphasis is on dispersed activities such as hunting, fishing, or hiking but localized and limited development that facilitates those uses may be located adjacent to the area.

Little or no visitor information is provided off-site to create any specific expectation of amenities. On-site information is limited and may be absent. It is typically a bulletin board. Signs are very limited. Visitors are expected to be skilled in the outdoors, self-reliant and well prepared. Visitor controls are not normally needed but may be used in preference to human modifications of the land itself to alleviate or prevent problems. Visitors' expectations and satisfaction will be monitored. Search and rescue or recovery is not readily available and permission for motorized operations requires a case-by-case decision made by appropriate authority level.

Permanent, human-made shelters may be present if they existed prior to wilderness recommendation, particularly those along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Recommended Wilderness management (MRx 1.B.) takes precedance over the A.T. MRx 4.A., but is sensitive to its standards and emphasis. Refer to the 4.A. standards.

Construction of new shelters and primitive privies at new locations within recommended wilderness is not allowed unless there is a need to protect natural resources from impacts of human visitors. Structures such as signs or bridges for the comfort or convenience of visitors are minimal or may not exist. The structures appearing in wilderness are generally for the protection of resources and visitors, or were present prior to wilderness recommendation. Forest-designated trails lie lightly on the land (typically narrow footpaths or horse trails) and have directional signing that blends with natural surroundings. Access to the area is limited. Trailheads at surrounding roads are designed with sensitivity to scale and character to set the tone for experiencing a primitive recreation experience.

Travel and recreation is strictly non-motorized. Although open roads may serve as boundaries to the area, its interior includes no open roads. Human access is by non-motorized means only. Existing roads may become trails. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area.

There are no wildlife habitat objectives for this prescription. Wildlife habitats are characterized by nearly unbroken tree canopy and old forest. Canopy removal occurs by natural events on about 2 to 3 percent of area per decade. Forest succession as a result of natural changes is gradually moving composition toward more tolerant species such as white pine, hemlock, beech, rhododendron, mountain laurel, red maple, sourwood, and blackgum. Large downed woody material, standing snags, and tree cavities are on a trend of increase. High-quality early-successional habitat rarely occurs, and then usually as a result of a combination of tree mortality followed by wildfire.

Data collection for research purposes occurs typically on a special project basis. Collection is rarely of actual specimens but is rather information. It may be frequent but is generally not.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on a sample basis to characterize larger scale conditions or trends or to monitor for threatened and endangered species.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed,

endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the U.S. Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. Where active management is used, quantitative pre-treatment inventory and post-treatment monitoring and reporting of response is done. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. Priority of heritage resource inventory areas within the wilderness will focus on known heritage resources, probability of containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites. Future heritage resource management will be determined during the development of wilderness plans.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

1.B-001 Privately owned surface and subsurface rights within these areas are high priorities for acquisition.

1.B-002 Private lands within and adjacent to recommended wilderness areas will be high priority for acquisition when such acquisition would improve the manageability of the wilderness.

1.B-003 Private land trusts adjacent to the boundaries of recommended wilderness areas will be encouraged.

1.B-004 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas.

1.B-005 Existing non-conforming uses will generally not be renewed.

1.B-006 Other special uses such as outfitter/guide permits, may be authorized, if consistent and compatible with the goals and objectives of these areas.

Minerals and Geology

1.B-007 Mineral leases: using stipulations such as no-surface occupancy and controlled surface use, and mineral material authorizations, could be allowed if compatible with wilderness study area designations.

1.B-008 Existing leases and authorizations will not be renewed.

1.B-009 Mineral and Fossil Collecting: Information gathering activities that involve only very minor surface disturbance and are compatible with the wilderness environment are permissible by permit from the Forest Supervisor.

1.B-010 No new mining claims can be located unless they are on reserved or outstanding mineral rights.

Vegetation and Forest Health

1.B-011 Native insects and diseases are not controlled, unless epidemics are expected to cause unacceptable damage to adjacent lands and resources.

1.B-012 Nonnative invasive pests are controlled if expected to cause an unnatural loss to the wilderness resource.

1.B-013 Noxious weeds may be eradicated by physical means such as grubbing when the infestations are isolated, and hand-applied chemicals may be used when absolutely necessary.

1.B-014 Apply the current *Minimum Requirement Decision Guide* to management activities in recommended wilderness areas.

Fire Management

1.B-015 Use the minimum amount of ground, vegetation, or stream disturbance that is effective to achieve fire management objectives.

1.B-016 Use suppression methods with the least detriment to wilderness, unless the fire is threatening public safety within the recommended wilderness area or resources and property outside the wilderness.

1.B-017 Management-ignited prescribed fire can be used in recommended wilderness study areas with approval by the Forest Service authority appropriate to the objective of the burn and when conducted by qualified Forest Service personnel.

1.B-018 Natural ignitions may be used in recommended wilderness areas to allow fires to play, as nearly as possible, their natural ecological role, as long as the applicable documentation has been prepared and approved.

Recreation

1.B-019 ROS settings will be managed for a primitive ROS class.

1.B-020 Design, construct, reconstruct, and maintain trails to the minimum standard necessary to minimize or prevent resource damage and protect the safety of wilderness users. Trails will appear to be part of the wilderness environment and not an intrusion upon it.

1.B-021 Appalachian National Scenic Trail: Wilderness management standards apply, such as no motorized equipment when maintenance or relocations occur. See MRx 4.A.

1.B-022 This area is closed to OHV use.

1.B-023 Decommission facilities that are not compatible with a wilderness environment.

Scenery

1.B-024 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH

Facilities, Roads, and Access

1.B-025 Motorized access is prohibited.

1.B-026 Construction of roads or trails for motorized use is prohibited. Only exterior boundary system roads occur.

1.B-027 Decommission all roads. Motorized equipment use is allowed to decommission roads. Prior to decommissioning, managed all roads as closed.

Timber Management

1.B–028 These lands are classified as unsuitable for timber production, not appropriate, under the NFMA; however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple use values, and activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

2.A CHATTOOGA WILD AND SCENIC RIVER CORRIDOR

Table 3- 2. Acres in Chattooga Wild and Scenic River Corridor by Forest by Classification

	Wild	Scenic	Recreational
Sumter National Forest (South Carolina)	3,290	224	1,030
Nantahala National Forest (North Carolina)	1,065	305	985
Chattahoochee National Forest (Georgia)	5,998	468	1,551
Total Acres	10,353	997	3,566

EMPHASIS

Congress designated this corridor as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. It is managed to protect and enhance the outstandingly remarkable values of the river and its surroundings. The river will be preserved in a free-flowing condition for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of present and future generations.

The Chattooga Wild and Scenic River (WSR) corridor is located in the Sumter, Nantahala, and Chattahoochee National Forests. Its 57 designated miles begin in North Carolina (Nantahala National Forest) and form the state boundary between South Carolina (Sumter National Forest) and Georgia (Chattahoochee National Forest). The river includes sections designated as 'wild,' 'scenic,' and 'recreational'.

The direction in this Plan specific to the Chattooga WSR (prescriptions 2.A, 2.A.1, 2.A.2. and 2.A.3.) constitutes the comprehensive plan as required in Section 3(d)(2) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Act).

Relative to the requirements in the Act, this direction:

- Describes the outstandingly remarkable values.
- Includes emphasis statements, desired conditions and standards to protect river values.
- Provides detailed direction for on-river recreation capacity and establishes capacity for in-corridor recreation through desired condition for facility development.
- Addresses water quality issues within the watershed, particularly through partnerships described in Chapter 4 of the Sumter National Forest LRMP.
- Includes river-specific monitoring measures for water quality and the outstandingly remarkable values in Chapter 5 of the Sumter National Forest LRMP.

The Nantahala and Chattahoochee National Forests will use this direction for management of the river within their respective forest boundaries.

By agreement among the three Forests, the Sumter National Forest has the lead authority for all boating/floating use (commercially-guided and self-guided) on the Chattooga River when it involves the main channel from Burrell's Ford to Lake Tugaloo, as well as the West Fork. The respective forest where they occur administers other land and water uses.

2.A CHATTOOGA WILD AND SCENIC RIVER CORRIDOR

Outstandingly Remarkable Values of the Chattooga River

In 1974, when the river was designated by Congress as a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System the river possessed several outstandingly remarkable values including geology, biology, scenery, recreation and history. These values have generally improved over the years.

Geology

The geologic and geomorphologic values of the Chattooga, as described in the 1971 Wild and Scenic River Study Report for the Chattooga River, included the deeply dissected escarpment and the steep, rocky, forested sloped that plunge into deep, narrow gorges. There are a series of outstanding monolithic treeless domes and slopes of exposed resistant granite, which occur at the upper headwaters of the river. Another feature of the river is that it flows into the Atlantic Ocean whereas most other rivers in the Southern Appalachian flow into the Gulf of Mexico. It is likely that the Tugaloo River (formed by the confluence of Chattooga and the Tallulah) captured these rivers from the Chattahoochee River. A stream capture of this magnitude is unusual in the region.

Biology

There is a variety and richness of plant life within the Chattooga Watershed, including the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River Corridor. The unique geography and climate characteristics provide habitats for uncommon assemblages of endemic, disjunct, and relic plant species. The rarest species within the Chattooga River Gorge landtype are Southern Appalachian endemics: liverworts, rock gnome lichen, Blue Ridge bindweed, Fraser's loosestrife, Manhart's sedge, Biltmore's sedge, pink shell azeala, and divided leaf ragwort. Old growth communities comprise almost 10% of the corridor. Federal and state agencies consider several non-game wildlife species within the watershed sensitive species.

Scenery

The scenery along the Chattooga River is exceptional. The scenery plays an important part in the Wild and Scenic River experience. The river is deeply entrenched between high ridges for large stretches of its length. Steep forested slopes on either side of the river give a feeling of seclusion. The river constantly meanders and curves and there are excellent views along these bends. The seasons change the landscape from the varying soft greens of spring and summer to a patchwork of red, yellow and orange. Winter finds the leaves stripped away and the patches of green from the white pines stand out against the gray-brown hillsides and exposed rock formations. The river itself provides a varying scene from a smooth flowing stream to a river with thundering falls and cascades, raging rapids, enormous boulders and cliff-enclosed deep pools.

Recreation

The recreation values of the river and corridor are outstanding along its 57-mile course. The river offers a wide variety of activities in a high-quality setting. Activities range from swimming to hiking and horseback riding with spectacular scenery to excellent trout fishing and nationally recognized white-water rafting opportunities. Other activities include backpacking, photography and nature study. Most of these activities take place in largely unmodified natural surroundings with many opportunities for remoteness and solitude.

History

Very little systematic survey has been completed in the river corridor. A total of 38 archeological sites have been recorded within the corridor. These include 15 prehistoric sites, 15 historic house and farmstead sites, a railroad embankment, 2 historic cemeteries, a 19th century mineral prospecting pit, and a rock shelter. Approximately half of these sites are considered potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Cherokees destroyed Chattooga Town, a large settlement of Indians, before

1600. The site is near the present day Highway 28 Bridge site. This regionally significant site is potentially eligible for the National Register.

STANDARDS

2.A-001 Floating on the Chattooga River is not allowed upstream of the Highway 28 Bridge.

2.A-002 Organized events (such as boat races) are not allowed on the river.

2.A-003 Motorized boats or craft are not allowed on the river.

2.A-004 The number of multi-year permits to provide guided inflatable raft trips for the public on the Chattooga River will not exceed three (3).

2.A-005 The number of multi-year permits to provide guided hardboat trips on the Chattooga River will not exceed five (5).

2.A-006 The recognized holidays for all boating/floating uses (both guided and self-guided) are Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day.

2.A-007 Allow no more than 12 craft on all guided trips.

2.A-008 Overnight camping at locations along the river by guided (inflatable and hardboat) permittees must be approved by the Forest Service.

2.A-009 The total allocation of guided inflatable trips (for all multi-year permittees combined) and their locations are as follows (see Table 3- 3 and Table 3- 4).

Allocation

Low Water Level (below approximately one foot at the Highway 76 gauge):

A. Weekdays, except for Holidays - 9 Section IV trips and no Section III trips (A map of these sections is found in Appendix I.) Only 6 of these trips may run Five Falls.

B. Weekends and Holidays:

1. October-April - 9 Section IV trips and no Section III trips. Only 5 of these trips may run Five Falls.
2. May-September - 8 Section IV trips and no Section III trips. Only 4 of these trips may run Five Falls.

Moderate Water Level (approximately 1 to 2 1/2 feet on the Highway 76 gauge):

A. Weekdays, except for Holidays - 6 Section IV trips and 7 Section III trips.

B. Weekends and Holidays:

1. October-April - 5 Section IV trips and 4 Section III trips.
2. May-September - 4 Section IV trips and 4 Section III trips.

2.A CHATTOOGA WILD AND SCENIC RIVER CORRIDOR

High Water Level (approximately 2 1/2 to 3 feet on the Highway 76 gauge). At this level, the Section IV trips may launch as far upstream as Thrift's Ferry, thus the Section III and Section IV trips may overlap between Thrift's Ferry and Highway 76. At this level, the Section IV trips may not run Five Falls.

A. Weekdays, except for Holidays - 6 Section IV trips and 7 Section III trips.
B. Weekends and Holidays:
   1. October-April - 5 Section IV trips and 4 Section III trips.
   2. May-September - 4 Section IV trips and 4 Section III trips.

Very High Water Level (approximately 3 feet on the Highway 76 gauge up to the maximum safe water level)

A. Weekdays, except for Holidays - No Section IV trips and 13 Section III trips.
B. Weekends and Holidays:
   1. October-April – No Section IV trips and 9 Section III trips.
   2. May-September - No Section IV trips and 8 Section III trips.

Trip size (including guides, paying clients and non-paying clients) does not exceed 40. Trips may exceed 30 clients, however, total number of clients served per section per day does not exceed an average of 30 per trip.

Location

A. Section III trips launch as far upstream as Earl's Ford, and take out as far downstream as Woodall Shoals, unless otherwise noted.
B. Section IV trips launch as far upstream as Highway 76, and takeout as far downstream as Lake Tugaloo, unless otherwise noted.
C. Section III and IV trips may overlap between Highway 76 and Woodall Shoals.
D. Inflatable raft trips in Sections III and IV can be moved to Sections I or II.
E. Short-term adjustments to the locations of launches and takeouts are necessary on rare occasions because of occurrences such as accidents or natural disasters, which affect access to, or navigability of, the river. These adjustments will only be made with the approval of the Forest Service.

Table 3- 3. Chattooga River Guided Rafting Allocations - Section III

Water Levels	Capacity Permitted	May – September		October - April	
		Weekdays	Weekends*	Weekdays	Weekends*
Low	Trips/day	0	0	0	0
	People/day+	0	0	0	0
Moderate	Trips/day	7	4	7	4
	People/day+	280	160	280	160
High	Trips/day	7	4	7	4
	People/day+	280	160	280	160
Very High Denominator indicates portion of trips allowed from Hwy 28 to Earl's or Sandy Ford	Trips/day	13/3	8/3	13/3	9/3
	People/day+	520	320	520	360

* Includes Holidays + Includes Guides

Table 3- 4. Chattooga River Guided Rafting Allocations - Section IV

Water Levels	Capacity Permitted	May – September		October - April	
		Weekdays	Weekends*	Weekdays	Weekends*
Low Denominator indicates portion of trips allowed in Five Falls	Trips/day	9/6	8/4	9/6	9/5
	People/day+	360	320	360	360
Moderate	Trips/day	6	4	6	5
	People/day+	240	160	240	200
High These trips may put in at Thrift's Ferry	Trips/day	6	4	6	5
	People/day+	240	160	240	200
Very High	Trips/day	0	0	0	0
	People/day+	0	0	0	0

* Includes Holidays + Includes Guides

2.A-010 The total allocation of guided hardboat trips (for all multi-year permittees combined) and their locations are as follows (see Table 3- 5):

Allocation

A. No more than 48 trips per week (20 on Section I/II and 28 on Section III) on weekdays.
B. No more than 13 trips (6 on Section I/II and 7 on Section III) on weekdays.
   No more than 2 trips per day on weekends.
   No trips on holidays or holiday weekends.
C. The combined total number of clients and instructors will not exceed 24 people per trip.
D. Two inflatable canoes and kayaks are allowed on each trip.

Location

A. Section I/II trips launch as far upstream as the West Fork registration site, and take out as far downstream as Earls Ford.
B. Section III trips launch as far upstream as Earls Ford, and take out as far downstream as Highway 76.
C. A trip in Section IV is allowed in the place of a scheduled Section IV guided inflatable trip.

Table 3- 5. Chattooga River Guided Hardboat Allocations

Day of the Week	Capacity Permitted	River Section	
		I & II	III
Weekdays	Trips/week	20	28
	Trips/day	6	7
Weekends	Trips/day	2	

2.A CHATTOOGA WILD AND SCENIC RIVER CORRIDOR

2.A-011 The total allocation of short-term canoe, kayak and inner-tube guided trips (for short term permits) and their locations are as follows:

Allocation

A. The number of permits is unlimited.
B. The maximum number of trips permitted each year by each different organization is 5. (Each day on the river is considered one trip.)
C. The maximum group size is 12 crafts (10 for students) for canoes and kayaks, not to exceed 24 people (including instructors).
D. The maximum group size is 24 inner tubes, not to exceed 24 people (including instructors).
E. Trips are allowed on weekdays only from April 1 through September 30 and on all days (including weekends) during the remainder of the year.

Location

A. Canoe and kayak trips can be taken in Sections I, II, and III only.
B. Inner tube trips can be taken in Sections I and II only.

2.A-012 The total allocation of self-guided boaters and their locations are as follows (see Table 3- 6 and Table 3- 7):

Allocation and Location

A. In Section III, year-round allocation for self-guided use at all water levels is 175 people per weekend day and holidays, and 125 people per weekday.
B. In Section IV, year-round allocation for self-guided use at all water levels is 160 people per weekend day and holidays, and 75 people per weekday.
C. The procedure for the enforcement of self-guided use allocations in Sections III and IV is:

   In Section III between April 1 and August 31, should daily self-guided use ever reach 175 people per weekend day (holidays included) for 20 days per year for 2 consecutive years, reservations would be required for self-guided boaters on Section III on weekends and holidays during those months beginning the following year. Similarly, should daily self-guided use reach 125 people per weekday for 50 weekdays per year for 2 consecutive years, reservations would be required for self-guided boaters on Section III on weekdays during those months beginning the following year.

   In Section IV between April 1 and August 31, should daily self-guided use ever reach 160 people per weekend day (holidays included) for 20 weekend days per year for 2 consecutive years, reservations would be required for self-guided boaters on Section IV on weekends and holidays during those months beginning the following year. Similarly, should daily self-guided use reach 75 people per weekday for 50 weekdays per year for 2 consecutive years, reservations would be required for self-guided boaters on Section IV on weekdays during those months beginning the following year.

D. Self-guided users will use a non-voluntary registration system.

Table 3- 6. Chattooga River Self-Guided Boating Use Allocations - Section III

Capacity Permitted	All Year	
	Weekdays	Weekends*
Boaters/day	125	175

*Includes Holidays

Table 3- 7. Chattooga River Self-Guided Boating Use Allocations - Section IV

Capacity Permitted	All Year	
	Weekdays	Weekends*
Boaters/day	75	160

*Includes Holidays

2.A-013 The total allocation of shuttles for self-guided boaters is as follows:

A. No more than two shuttle permittees.
B. No more than 30 percent of the daily self-guided allocation by section is authorized for shuttle services.

2.A-014 Possessing or using a saddle, pack or draft animal is prohibited within the corridor unless on a designated trail or road.

2.A-015 The corridor is unsuitable for timber production, withdrawn by Congress.

2.A-016 New utility corridors or communications/electronic sites will be discouraged within the corridor.

2.A-017 Fire can be used within the corridor if the outstandingly remarkable values of the stream are protected.

2.A-018 Limit mountain biking to designated routes.

2.A-019 For all sections of designated Wild and Scenic Rivers, insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources provided that pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms and induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem.

2.A.1 CHATTOOGA RIVER – DESIGNATED WILD RIVER SEGMENTS

2.A.1 CHATTOOGA RIVER - DESIGNATED WILD RIVER SEGMENTS

Table 3- 8. Chattooga River Corridor– Wild River Segments

National Forest	Wild River Segments (in acres)
Sumter National Forest (South Carolina)	3,290
Nantahala National Forest (North Carolina)	1,065
Chattahoochee National Forest (Georgia)	5,998
Total Acres	10,353

EMPHASIS

Congress designated these wild river segments and their associated corridors as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. They are managed to protect and enhance the outstandingly remarkable values of the river. The river will be preserved in a free-flowing condition for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of present and future generations.

DESIRED CONDITION

These segments of the Chattooga River are the most primitive and remote. Management of these segments is focused on protecting the outstandingly remarkable values of the river and preserving the natural environment and natural processes from human influences. Access to the area is limited to roads outside of the corridor. Non-motorized trails accommodate use and river access while protecting the resources and the river's outstanding resource values. Canoeing, kayaking, fishing, outfitted use, hiking, backpacking, and wildlife viewing are all typical uses along some parts of this corridor. Most users enjoy these activities without seeing many other users except at the occasional boat put-ins and trailheads. Capacity of facilities is typically low, and they are rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities. Floating these segments of the river, if allowed, requires considerable skill and self-reliance. (Some wild segments do not allow floating/boating.) The recreational opportunities are in a semi-primitive non-motorized setting.

The landscape character is natural evolving with a mostly continous canopy except for the linear swath of the river itself. Occasional gaps occur from the results of natural disturbances. Most of the forest is mature, with many large trees. Most common tree species include hemlock, white pine, and various hardwoods. Understory plants, particularly rhododendron, silverbell, dogwood, redbud, and ferns such as Christmas fern and New York fern, provide a lush vegetative understory visible from the river and trails. Old growth forests predominate, except where significant natural disturbances occur.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained, but no creation of new permanent openings of this type occurs. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife.

Mature forests and older stands in various stages of climax canopy development and decline dominate habitat conditions provided though this prescription. Wildlife responsive to large diameter standing snags and living den trees (raccoon, barred owl, great-crested flycatcher, chickadee, etc.) would be expected here in high densities if adequate food supplies were available. High canopy species such as red-eyed vireo and species that use mid-story and well developed shrub layers in understory (thrushes, ovenbird, etc.) would also be expected in high densities.

Disturbance is primarily caused by natural process (floods, wind storms, insects, diseases, and fires) or prescribed fire. Prescribed fire may be used to mimic natural disturbances and to maintain and restore rare communities and threatened, endangered and sensitive species habitat. Integrated pest management practices might be used to control or minimize impacts from native and non-native invasive species. This may include the use of mechanized equipment, power tools and approved pesticides. Mechanized equipment and power tools may also be used to provide for public health and safety; search and rescue; and maintenance of facilities, trails, and wildlife openings.

STANDARDS

2.A.1-001 The scenic integrity objective is Very High for all inventoried scenic classes.

2.A.1-002 Road construction and new river crossings are prohibited, subject to valid existing rights or leases.

2.A.1-003 No federal mineral leasing. No mineral material authorization is permitted for commercial or private use.

2.A.1-004 No new wildlife clearings will be developed, but existing ones may be maintained.

2.A.1-005 This prescription includes portions of the Big Mountain inventoried roadless area. Management actions will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of the entire inventoried roadless area.

2.A.2 CHATTOOGA RIVER – DESIGNATED SCENIC RIVER SEGMENTS

2.A.2 CHATTOOGA RIVER - DESIGNATED SCENIC RIVER SEGMENTS

Table 3- 9. Chattooga River Corridor – Scenic River Segments

National Forest	Scenic River Segments (in acres)
Sumter National Forest (South Carolina)	224
Nantahala National Forest (North Carolina)	305
Chattahoochee National Forest (Georgia)	468
Total Acres	997

EMPHASIS

Congress designated these scenic river segments and their associated corridors as a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. They are managed to protect and enhance the outstandingly remarkable values that led to their designation. The river itself is preserved in a free-flowing condition for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of present and future generations. Recreation opportunities emphasize relatively low development levels.

DESIRED CONDITION

The scenic river segments on the Chattooga are slightly more developed than the wild segments. The river's shorelines are undeveloped with occasional roads or bridges crossing the river, and there may be designated parking areas and trailheads. Non-motorized trails accommodate use and river access while protecting the resources and the river's outstanding resource values. Non-motorized trail users may include hikers, anglers, boaters, mountain bikers, and horseback riders.

Visitors enjoy a natural, setting although the sights and sounds of other visitors and civilization may be present. Visitors' outdoor skills are challenged moderately. The opportunity to encounter other visitors is moderate to high, depending upon the location and time of year. Visitors seeking solitude visit during non-peak seasons, mid-week, or by hiking some distance from roads and parking areas.

Recreational facilities are primarily for visitor safety and access and to protect the river resources. Capacity of facilities is typically low, and they are rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities. The recreational opportunities are in semi-primitive motorized setting.

The landscape character is natural appearing and pastoral with a mostly continous canopy, except for the linear swath of the river itself. Most of the forest is mature, with many large trees. Most common tree species include hemlock, white pine, and various hardwoods. Understory plants, particularly rhododendron, silverbell, dogwood, redbud, and ferns such as Christmas fern and New York fern, provide a lush vegetative understory visible from the river and trails. Old growth forests predominate, except where significant natural disturbances occur. Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained. New wildlife openings may be created if they enhance the outstandingly remarkable values of the corridor. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife.

Mature forests and older stands in various stages of climax canopy development and decline dominate habitat conditions provided though this prescription. Wildlife responsive to large diameter standing snags and living den trees (raccoon, barred owl, great-crested flycatcher, chickadee, etc.) would be expected here in high densities if adequate food supplies were available. High canopy species such as red-eyed vireo and species that use mid-story and well developed shrub layers in understory (thrushes, ovenbird, etc.) would also be expected in high densities.

Disturbance is primarily caused by natural process (floods, wind storms, and fires) or prescribed fire. Management actions may provide scenic vistas and watchable wildlife opportunities, maintain developed recreation facilities and trails, restore native vegetative communities, restore aquatic and riparian ecosystems, reduce fuel buildup and control non-native invasive vegetation. Prescribed fire is used to mimic natural disturbances and to maintain and restore desired communities. Integrated pest management practices might be used to control or minimize impacts from native and non-native invasive species. This may include the use of mechanized equipment, power tools and approved pesticides. Mechanized equipment and power tools may also be used to provide for public health and safety; search and rescue; and maintenance of facilities, trails and wildlife openings.

STANDARDS

2.A.2-001	The scenic integrity objective is High for inventoried scenic classes.
2.A.2-002	Road construction and new river crossing are prohibited, subject to valid existing rights or leases
2.A.2-003	Federal mineral leasing is allowed with a no surface occupancy (NSO) stipulation. No mineral material authorization is permitted for private or commercial use.
2.A.2-004	Allow no new wildlife openings, unless they enhance the outstandingly remarkable values.
2.A.2-005	This prescription includes portions of the Ellicott Rock wilderness addition inventoried roadless area. Management actions will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of the entire inventoried roadless area.

2.A.3 CHATTOOGA RIVER – DESIGNATED RECREATIONAL RIVER SEGMENTS

Table 3- 10. Chattooga River Corridor – Recreational River Segments

National Forest	Recreational River Segment (in acres)
Sumter National Forest (South Carolina)	1,030
Nantahala National Forest (North Carolina)	985
Chattahoochee National Forest (Georgia)	1,551
Total Acres	3,566

EMPHASIS

Congress designated these recreational river segments and their associated corridors as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. They are managed to protect and enhance the outstandingly remarkable values that led to their designation. The river itself is preserved in a free-flowing condition for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of present and future generations. A range of recreational opportunities is provided in this prescription area. These opportunities are characteristic of, and in harmony with, the natural setting of the individual river segments.

DESIRED CONDITION

The river corridor provides outstanding opportunities for people to enjoy a wide variety of river-oriented recreation opportunities in an attractive natural setting.

Visitors are likely to see others. Non-motorized trails may be highly developed, including hardened trails for a high level of accessibility for persons of all abilities. The river is readily accessible by roads. Roads may parallel the river for stretches.

There is evidence of human activity along the shores of these segments of river. There is limited need for visitors to rely on their personal physical abilities and primitive recreation skills within developed and trail areas of these segments. Other areas remain remote and difficult to access or negotiate. Visitors seeking solitude may find it difficult to achieve, particularly in peak-use rafting and fishing seasons. On National Forest system land, visitors enjoy a natural-appearing setting with a range of man-made recreational developments. Since there is the potential for large numbers of visitors at peak-use seasons, regulations may be necessary to protect resources and visitors. Facilities provide visitor safety and comfort and protect the river resources. Facilities may include parking areas, trailheads, bulletin boards, interpretive kiosks, signs, restrooms, canoe/raft launches, fishing platforms, picnic sites, etc. The recreational opportunities are in roaded natural setting.

The landscape character is mostly natural appearing and pastoral. Plant communities are structurally diverse with occasional small gaps occurring from natural events and

vegetation manipulation by humans. However, most of the forest in these sections is mature, with many large trees. Most common tree species include hemlock, white pine, and various hardwoods. Understory plants, particularly rhododendron, silverbell, dogwood, redbud, and ferns such as Christmas fern and New York fern, provide a lush vegetative understory visible from the river and trails. Management actions may provide scenic vistas and watchable wildlife opportunities, maintain developed recreation facilities and trails, restore native vegetative communities, restore aquatic and riparian ecosystems, reduce fuel buildup, and control non-native invasive vegetation. Prescribed fire is used to mimic natural disturbances and to maintain and restore desired communities. Integrated pest management practices might be used to control or minimize impacts from native and non-native invasive species. This may include the use of mechanized equipment, power tools and approved pesticides. Mechanized equipment and power tools may also be used to provide for public health and safety; search and rescue; and maintenance of facilities, trails and wildlife openings. Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained, but no creation of new permanent openings of this type occurs. New wildlife openings may be created if they enhance the outstandingly remarkable values of the corridor. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife.

Mature forests and older stands in various stages of climax canopy development and decline dominate habitat conditions provided though this prescription. Wildlife responsive to large diameter standing snags and living den trees (raccoon, barred owl, great-crested flycatcher, chickadee, etc.) would be expected here in high densities if adequate food supplies were available. High canopy species such as red-eyed vireo and species that use mid-story and well developed shrub layers in understory (thrushes, ovenbird, etc.) would also be expected in high densities. Species associated with habitat conditions found in riparian areas (e.g., Acadian flycatcher, parula warbler, and Louisiana waterthrush) could potentially be found in high densities in these areas.

STANDARDS

2.A.3-001 The scenic integrity objective is High for inventoried scenic classes 1 and 2, and Moderate for scenic classes 3 through 5.

2.A.3-002 No new river crossings are permitted, subject to valid existing rights.

2.A.3-003 Federal mineral leasing is allowed with a no surface occupancy (NSO) stipulation. Mineral material authorizations will be allowed.

2.A.3-004 Allow no new wildlife openings unless they enhance the outstandingly remarkable values.

2.B RECOMMENDED WILD, SCENIC, AND RECREATIONAL RIVERS

This prescription would manage streams recommended for further study to determine their suitability for designation as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System as if they were already designated. Should further study result in concluding that streams or portions of streams are not suitable, the unsuitable portion will be managed under prescription 4.H unless the Plan is amended to allocate them to another prescription. Streams or portions of streams found to be suitable are managed with this prescription until it is superseded by direction from authority above the Regional Forester or until Congress acts to designate them. If Congress designates some but not all of those streams recommended to them, those not designated will be managed under prescription 4.H unless the Plan is amended to allocate them to another prescription. Standards are designed in anticipation of eventual Congressional action on the rivers recommended for further study leading to Wild and Scenic River designation. When Congress designates additions to the Wild and Scenic River system, those additions will be amended into MRx 2.A.

The streams recommended for further study and their segment classifications are:

Ocmulgee River	One section: scenic
Conasauga/Jacks	Four sections: wild, scenic, wild, recreational
Chattahoochee River	Four sections: wild, recreational, wild, recreational
Overflow	One section: wild
Little River	One section: scenic

EMPHASIS

These streams and their associated corridors have been recommended for further study of their suitability for Congressional designation as wild, scenic, or recreational river segments as a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. They are managed to protect and perpetuate the outstandingly remarkable values that qualifies them for further study. The streams would be preserved in a free-flowing condition for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of present and future generations.

OBJECTIVES

OBJ-2.B-01 Amend the Forest Plan within one year of Congressional designation of recommended Wild and Scenic Rivers by including them in the 2.A prescriptions, along with any needed stream-specific management direction.

OBJ-2.B-02 Develop a comprehensive river management plan for each designated Wild and Scenic river within three years of Congressional designation.

OBJ-2.B-03 Within ten years of Congressional designation of the Ocmulgee River in classified scenic and recreational sections suitable for floating, establish campsites and put-in/take-out facilities at approximately one-half day float travel distance increments.

STANDARDS

2.B-001 Maintain consistent management within any designated river corridor shared by more than one Forest.

2.B-002 For all classifications of Wild and Scenic Rivers recommended for further study, management actions will not cause substantial adverse effect to the river and its corridor.

2.B-003 For all classifications of Wild and Scenic Rivers recommended for further study, the purposes for management actions must be compatible with the intent of the WSR Act, legislation designating individual streams, and FSH 1909.12, Chapter 8.

2.B-004 All classifications of Wild and Scenic Rivers recommended for further study are unsuitable for timber production. Wild sections are classified as unsuitable, withdrawn by Congress. Scenic and recreational sections are classified as unsuitable, not appropriate; however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals or objectives are permitted.

2.B-005 For all classifications of Wild and Scenic Rivers recommended for further study, leasable minerals authorizations will require *no-surface-occupancy* stipulations.

2.B-006 For all classifications of Wild and Scenic Rivers recommended for further study, riding or pack animal use will be only on open roads, or trails identified for that use.

2.B-007 For all classifications of Wild and Scenic Rivers recommended for further study, no new OHV routes will be constructed or designated.

2.B-008 Management actions will not negatively affect the outstandingly remarkable values such that classification of a river segment is downgraded; that is, from wild to scenic or recreational or from scenic to recreational or from recreational to not eligible.

2.B-009 Segments of a classified Wild and Scenic River recommended for further study within a Congressionally-designated Wilderness area will be managed in accordance with the Wilderness designation.

2.B-010 On that portion of the Oconee National Forest south of Interstate 20, the requirements of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service January 2003 RCW Recovery Plan and its amendments must be complied with in each management prescription.

2.B.-011 For all classifications of Wild and Scenic Rivers recommended for further study, insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which the area is recognizeded, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources provided that pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms and induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem.

2.B.1 RECOMMENDED WILD RIVER SEGMENTS

2.B.1 RECOMMENDED WILD RIVER SEGMENTS

The eligible streams recommended for further study for their suitability for possible designation of wild river segments are:

Conasauga/Jacks	Four sections: wild, scenic, wild, recreational
Chattahoochee River	Four sections: wild, recreational, wild, recreational
Overflow	One section: wild

DESIRED CONDITION

Of all the river designations, "wild" offers the most primitive and remote setting. Management of the river corridor is focused on protecting and preserving the natural environment from human influences. Recreation management is designed to provide the most primitive and natural setting possible. Access to the area is limited to roads outside the corridor.

The landscape character would be natural evolving with natural evolution of biophysical features and processes, with very limited human intervention. Natural change would be assumed to be visually acceptable and no active management would be directed at moderating visual contrasts. Only the linear swath of the river breaks the continuous forest canopy. Human-caused change may be specifically mitigated to be made less obvious. The SIO of Very High generally provides for ecological change only.

No visitor information would be provided within the wild and scenic river corridor to create any specific expectation of amenities. Signs are very limited. Trailheads are located near perimeter roads and designed with sensitivity to the river segment's outstandingly remarkable values. Visitors are expected to be skilled in the outdoors, self-reliant and well prepared. Visitors' expectations and satisfaction will be monitored. Search and rescue or recovery would not be readily available and permission to use motorized operations would require a case-by-case decision made at a level of authority appropriate to the intensity and duration of the operations.

Only exterior boundary open roads occur. Closed roads for administrative use may occur but are at low to very low density. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Roads outside the wild river corridor itself may occasionally intrude on the sights and sounds within the area. Once in the designated wild river corridor, visitors must rely on their own personal physical abilities and primitive recreation skills. Trails are designed to accommodate use and river access while protecting resources and the river's outstanding resource values. Signs are designed to complement the natural environment in scale, character, and color. Most visitor information would be provided outside of the wild river corridor at trailheads and through off-site public information and education efforts. Wild river visitors are encouraged to "pack-it-in and pack-it-out" and to "leave no trace."

Facilities are typically trails. Structures are rare. Existing facilities are maintained in serviceable condition with the emphasis on resource protection. They are not improved beyond their original design. In these areas no new facilities are provided. Access may be restricted to foot travel only. Normally, permit motorized travel is not permitted on the trail system.

There are no wildlife habitat objectives for this prescription. Wildlife habitats are characterized by nearly unbroken tree canopy and old forest. Canopy removal occurs by

natural events on about 2 to 3 percent of area per decade. Forest succession as a result of natural changes would be gradually moving composition toward more tolerant species such as white pine, hemlock, beech, rhododendron, mountain laurel, red maple, sourwood, and blackgum. Large downed woody material, standing snags, and tree cavities are on a trend of increase. High-quality early-successional habitat rarely occurs and then usually as a result of a combination of tree mortality followed by wildfire.

Prescribed fire may be used for control of nonnative pests and to create, enhance, or maintain threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species habitat necessary to perpetuate these flora or fauna.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on a sample basis to characterize larger scale conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects and also managed to restore native species as appropriate.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically but not necessarily annually. Data collected would typically be basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the forest. Visitor controls are not normally needed.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. Priority of heritage resource inventory areas within the recommended Wild and Scenic River prescriptions will focus on known heritage resources, probability of containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as riverbanks, trails and campsites. Future heritage resource management will be determined during the development of Wild and Scenic river plans.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

2.B.1-001 Private lands adjacent to the river corridor will be high priority for acquisition when such acquisition would improve the manageability of the corridor.

2.B.1-002 Private land trusts within the wild and scenic river corridor will be encouraged.

2.B.1-003 New utility corridors or communication/electronic sites will be discouraged within these areas.

2.B.1-004 Use renewal of special use permits issued prior to designation of the wild and scenic river as an opportunity to strengthen protections for outstandingly remarkable values.

2.B.1-005 Outfitter/guide permits will not be issued until an approved river management plan is in effect following designation.

Minerals and Geology

2.B.1-006 New mining claims and mineral leases are prohibited within one-quarter mile of the river.

2.B.1-007 Valid claims will be respected.

2.B.1-008 Do not make mineral materials available for commercial use, personal use, or free use purposes.

Fire Management

2.B.1-009 Natural ignition fires are permitted to play a natural role within parameters identified in an approved fire management prescription.

2.B.1-010 Fire is acceptable if the outstandingly remarkable values of the stream can be protected.

2.B.1-011 Use the minimum amount of ground, vegetation, or stream disturbance that is effective to achieve fire management objectives.

Recreation

2.B.1-012 These areas are to be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings of SPNM. Prohibit all motorized and mechanized use except for emergency operations and administrative use.

2.B.1-013 This area would be closed to OHV use.

2.B.1-014 Horse and pack stock use is confined to designated trails only.

2.B.1-015 Do not develop new bike trails. Existing bike use will be phased out.

Scenery

2.B.1-016 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH	VH

Facilities, Roads, and Access

2.B.1-017 Subject to valid existing rights or leases, do not allow roads.

Vegetation Management

2.B.1-018 Existing wildlife openings may be maintained but new openings, including food plots, may not be created.

2.B.2 RECOMMENDED SCENIC RIVER SEGMENTS

The eligible streams recommended for further study for their suitability for possible designation of scenic river segments are:

Ocmulgee River	One scenic section only
Conasauga/Jacks	Four sections: wild, scenic, wild, recreational
Little River	One scenic section only

DESIRED CONDITION

Scenic river segments and their surroundings are slightly more developed by humans than their "wild" counterparts. The riverbanks are largely undeveloped with occasional roads or bridges crossing the river, and and there may be designated parking areas and trailheads. Management of the river corridor would be focused on protecting and preserving the natural environment. Recreational management may be designed to accommodate hikers, anglers, boaters, mountain bikers, and horseback riders.

The landscape character could be natural evolving, natural appearing, pastoral, or historic with a High SIO. A visitor may see some evidence of human disturbance depending upon the desired landscape character. Scenic quality is the outstandingly remarkable value for these river segments. The linear swath of the river may break the continuous riparian forest canopy. Occasional gaps may occur in the canopy from the result of natural disturbances. In high SIO areas, activities may only repeat attributes of form, line, color and texture found in the existing landscape character.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife occassionally occur and use of fire, mowing, or grazing may be evident to maintain them as open. In some cases, existing openings may be restored to forest through tree planting and elimination of nonnative species. New permanent wildlife openings are not encountered.

Natural-appearing managed change occurs, but affects a very limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape would be rare.

Visitors enjoy a natural setting, although sights and sounds of human activity and motorized vehicles may be present on system roads. Visitors' physical abilities and primitive recreation skills can be challenged. The opportunity to encounter other visitors would be low to moderate depending on the location and time of year. Interpretive signs, trails, and facilities are minimal and are primarily for visitor safety, access, and to protect riparian resources. All improvements will be subordinate to the river's outstanding remarkable values. Most visitor information would be provided outside of the scenic river corridor at trailheads and through off-site public information and education efforts. Scenic river visitors are encouraged to "pack-it-in and pack-it-out" and to "leave no trace."

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Visitors' expectations and satisfaction will be monitored. Search and rescue would not be readily available.

2.B.2 RECOMMENDED SCENIC RIVER SEGMENTS

Environmental effects of recovery operations are planned to be minimal and promptly rehabilitated.

Facilities are primarily non-structural; for example, roads, trails, tables, tent pads, etc. Structures are uncommon. Access may be possible by passenger car. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. In these areas existing facilities are maintained above a resource protection level but without a strong emphasis on visitor expectations. Capacity of facilities would typically be low and they are rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities.

On the Chattahoochee National Forest, the river corridor is comprised primarily of hardwoods and white pines on slopes, and a mixture of hardwoods and hemlocks along the river's banks. On the Oconee National Forest, the river corridor is bottomland hardwoods comprised of oaks, sweetgums, blackgums, sycamores and elms. Understory plants provide a lush vegetative understory visible from the river and trails.

Vegetation management is for the purpose of enhancing the outstandingly remarkable values of the area such as trail clearing, prescribed fire, removal of nonnative invasive plant species, ecological community restoration and forest health.

These areas will be characterized by mid- to late-successional forests, with little to no human-caused forest openings. Disturbances would be primarily caused by natural processes. Many small gaps and occasional large openings of early-successcional forest habitat may be created through natural disturbances.

Management of wildlife/aquatic habitats is for the purpose of enhancing the outstandingly remarkable values of the area such as the improvements of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species habitat; restoration of native vegetative communities; restoration of riparian ecosystems; or control of nonnative invasive vegetation.

There are no wildlife habitat objectives for this prescription. Wildlife habitats are characterized by nearly unbroken tree canopy and old forest. Canopy removal occurs by natural events on about 2 to 3 percent of area per decade. Large downed woody material, standing snags, and tree cavities would be increasing. High-quality, early-successional habitat rarely occurs and then usually as a result of a combination of tree mortality followed by wildfire.

Streams are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore, and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial

effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. Priority of heritage resource inventory areas within the recommended Wild and Scenic River prescriptions will focus on known heritage resources, probability of containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as riverbanks, trails and campsites. Future heritage resource management will be determined during the development of Wild and Scenic river plans.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

2.B.2-001 Private lands adjacent to the river corridor will be high priority for acquisition when such acquisition would improve the manageability of the corridor.

2.B.2-002 Private land trusts within the wild and scenic river corridor will be encouraged.

2.B.2-003 New utility corridors or communication/electronic sites will be discouraged within these corridors.

2.B.2-004 Use renewal of special use permits issued prior to designation of the wild and scenic river as an opportunity to strengthen protections for outstandingly remarkable values.

2.B.2-005 Outfitter/guide permits will not be issued until an approved management plan is in effect.

Minerals and Geology

2.B.2-006 Personal use mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect the scenic character may be permitted.

Fire Management

2.B.2-007 Natural ignition fires are permitted to play a natural role within parameters identified in an approved fire management prescription.

2.B.2-008 Fire can be used if the outstandingly remarkable values of the stream can be protected.

Recreation

2.B.2-009 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed the ROS setting of SPM.

2.B.2-010 This area is closed to OHV use.

2.B.2 RECOMMENDED SCENIC RIVER SEGMENTS

Scenery

2.B.2-011 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	H	H	H	H	H

Facilities, Roads, and Access

2.B.2-012 Existing roads are allowed.

2.B.2-013 New road construction is allowed to provide access for recreation, administrative use, or emergency operations consistent with the outstandingly remarkable values of the area.

2.B.2-014 Decommission roads causing environmental damage, or degrading desired landscape character or scenic integrity, or to manage visitor use and access. Administratively close roads if possible.

Vegetation Management

2.B.2-015 Existing wildlife openings may be maintained but new ones may not be created.

2.B.3 RECOMMENDED RECREATIONAL RIVER SEGMENTS

The eligible streams recommended for further study for their suitability for possible designation of recreational river segments are:

Conasauga/Jacks	Four sections: wild, scenic, wild, recreational
Chattahoochee River	Four sections: wild, recreational, wild, recreational

DESIRED CONDITION

The recreational river corridor provides river-oriented recreation in an attractive natural setting. The river is readily accessible by roads and trails. Roads may parallel the river for stretches.

The landscape character will be natural appearing, including cultural features and processes. There is evidence of human activity along the rivers. Visitors enjoy a natural appearing setting with a range of human-made recreational developments. Utility, roads or railroad corridors may be seen. Facilities remain visually subordinate to the natural landscape. Scenic Integrity Objectives will range from High to Moderate. In High SIO areas, activities may only repeat attributes of form, line, color and texture found in the existing landscape character. In Moderate SIO areas, the valued landscape character appear slightly altered.

Natural-appearing managed change occurs but affects a very limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time.

Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change. There is a low need for visitors to rely on their physical abilities and primitive recreation skills within these areas. The sights and sounds of other visitors are evident, and opportunities to encounter other visitors are high. Non-motorized trails may be highly developed, including hardened trails for a high level of accessibility for persons with all levels of abilities. Improvements will be subordinate to the river's outstandingly remarkable values. Recreational river visitors are encouraged to "pack it in and pack it out" and to "leave no trace." Regulations are necessary to protect resources and visitors.

Facilities may include parking areas, trailheads, bulletin boards, interpretive kiosks, signs, restrooms, canoe/raft launches, fishing platforms, picnic sites, etc. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

Trash receptacles are provided at parking areas and high-use areas. Facilities are designed to fit the character of the specific sites where they are located. The recreational opportunities are in a roaded natural setting.

Visitors are informed through a variety of media and materials, as well as a limited number and kind of outlets, to expect basic amenities. Acquiring the most complete and current information typically requires contacting a Forest Service employee or visiting a Forest Service office. Basic information is available at visitor information outlets in and near the Forest. Signs permit navigation with minimal concern or confusion. Visitors are not expected to be very self-reliant and supplies or services are usually available nearby

2.B.3 RECOMMENDED RECREATIONAL RIVER SEGMENTS

at private businesses. Visitor satisfaction and expectations are routinely monitored on-site with voluntary response cards and personal contacts. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are available quickly and motorized operations are not constrained by Plan direction.

Vegetation is influenced both by natural processes and humans. Prescribed fire, commercial timber harvest, and noncommercial felling of trees may be used for scenic enhancement or rehabilitation to provide wildlife-viewing or wildlife-hunting opportunities; maintain developed recreation facilities; improve threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species habitat; restore native vegetative communities; restore riparian ecosystems; reduce unnatural fuel buildups; or control nonnative invasive vegetation. Mature forests and older stands in various stages of climax canopy development and decline dominate habitat conditions.

Management of wildlife/aquatic habitats is for the purpose of enhancing the outstandingly remarkable values of the area. Management activities would include efforts to enhance the fisheries resource, restore native vegetative communities, restore riparian ecosystems, or control nonnative invasive vegetation.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife as well as newly-created ones may be encountered infrequently. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Streams are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. Priority of heritage resource inventory areas within the recommended Wild and Scenic River prescriptions will focus on known heritage resources, probability of containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as riverbanks, trails and campsites. Future heritage resource management will be determined during the development of Wild and Scenic river plans.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

2.B.3-001 Use renewal of special use permits issued prior to designation of the wild and scenic river as an opportunity to strengthen protections for outstandingly remarkable values.

2.B.3-002 Other special uses, like outfitter/guide permits will not be issued until an approved Wild and Scenic River Management Plan is in effect.

2.B.3-003 New utility corridors or communiction/electronic sites will be discouraged wthin these corridors.

Geology and Minerals

2.B.3-004 Personal use mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect the scenic character may be permitted.

Fire Management

2.B.3-005 Natural ignition fires are permitted to play a natural role within parameters identified in an approved fire management prescription.

2.B.3-006 Fire can be used if the outstandingly remarkable values of the stream can be protected.

Recreation

2.B.3-007 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed the ROS setting of Roaded Natural.

2.B.3-008 Do not authorize new designated OHV trails. Allow OHV only on existing designated trails or open roads in the river corridor.

Scenery

2.B.3-009 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	M	M	M	M	M

Facilities, Roads, and Access

2.B.3-010 New road construction is allowed to provide recreational access, administrative use, or emergency operations consistent with the outstandingly remarkable values of the area.

2.B.3-011 Decommission roads causing environmental damage, or degrading desired landscape character or scenic integrity, or to manage visitor use and access. Administratively close roads as necessary.

2.B.3-012 Existing wildlife openings are maintained and new ones may be created.

3 OTHER CONGRESSIONALLY-DESIGNATED OR RECOMMENDED AREAS

3.A COOSA BALD NATIONAL SCENIC AREA

EMPHASIS

National Scenic Areas are managed to protect and enhance the outstanding natural beauty, special ecological features, watershed integrity, mature forest habitat, scenic recreation opportunities, and other distinctive values for which Congress designates them, including managing for species viability as appropriate. Forest health is maintained to protect the values for which the area was established, including scenery and recreation.

DESIRED CONDITION

The landscape character is natural appearing with an intact, continuous forest canopy. Occasional gaps may occur in the canopy from the results of natural disturbances or management activities needed for wildlife species viability. Old-growth forest communities become part of the area over time. Understory vegetation includes a variety of native deciduous and evergreen flowering shrubs and wildflowers.

This area is managed with a focus on scenic values. In High SIO areas, activities may only repeat attributes of form, line, color and texture found in the existing landscape character.

Natural appearing managed change occurs, but affects a very limited area. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is rare.

Hiking, mountain biking, and horse trails may be present in the prescription area. Visitors enjoy primarily a natural setting; however, visitors are not isolated from sights and sounds of other human activity. The opportunity to encounter other visitors is high at parking areas, pullouts, and overlooks, but may be from moderate to low on trails away from concentrated use areas. Some trails may be highly developed, including hardened trails for accessibility to persons with all levels of abilities.

Visitors are informed through a variety of media and materials, as well as a limited number and kind of outlets, to expect basic amenities. Acquiring the most complete and current information typically requires contacting a Forest Service employee or visiting a Forest Service office. Basic information is available at visitor information outlets in and near the Forest. Signs permit navigation with minimal concern or confusion. Visitors are not expected to be very self-reliant and supplies or services are usually available nearby at private businesses. Visitor satisfaction and expectations are routinely monitored on-site with voluntary response cards and personal contacts. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are available quickly and motorized operations are not constrained by Plan direction.

Facilities include a mix of structural and non-structural types. Access is by all-weather roads that are passable by passenger car and may be paved. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system roads density remains at a low level in comparison with the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. In these areas, existing facilities are well-maintained and new facilities are provided with strong safeguards for the quality of the recreation experience and environmental values. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is incrementally changed in response to visitor demand and expectations, but facilities on private lands are not duplicated. Facilities may be staffed during daylight hours during the entire recreation season and, where camping is available, a contact person may be available twenty-four hours a day in season on a volunteer, partnership or similar basis. Security is primarily on a routine patrol basis.

Vegetation manipulation may be used for scenic enhancement, such as the creation of vistas and parklike effects, enhancing fall color species, and limbing up trees. Management activities could create openings for viewing wildlife, maintaining developed recreation facilities, or providing habitat to contribute to species viability with a focus on, but not limited to, threatened, endangered, sensitive, or locally rare species habitat Uneven-aged forest communities will develop throughout the area including large, medium, and small patches of old-growth forest communities.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized interior openings of 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately 30 acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forest conditions. High elevation early succession habitats will be provided for species dependent on that habitat association.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained. The creation or expansion of wildlife openings may occur. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. Priority of heritage resource inventory areas within the scenic designation will focus on known heritage resources, probability of containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-3.A-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forest acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

3.A-001 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas.

Minerals and Geology

3.A-002 Federal mineral leases and mineral material authorizations will be handled according to the designating legislation, which states that the Scenic Area is withdrawn from operation of all laws pertaining to mineral leasing (*Public Law 102-217, Section 3 (b)(5))*.

Vegetation and Forest Health

3.A-003 insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources provided that pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms and induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem.

3.A-004 Trees may be cut and removed to reduce hazards to visitors, or for safety or legal reasons.

3.A-005 Hazard trees will be cut and removed in both dispersed and developed recreation settings and along trails and roads as necessary.

Fire Management

3.A-006 Prescribed fire may be utilized for the benefit of the purpose of forest health, hazard reduction, and wildlife management.

Recreation

3.A-007 Area will be managed to meet or exceed ROS setting SPNM

3.A-008 This area is closed to OHV use.

Scenery

3.A-009 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	H	H	H	H	H

Facilities, Roads, and Access

3.A-010 System roads may be constructed within the area to further the purposes for which the area was established, but total system road density remains at a low level in comparison with the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

Timber Management

3.A-011 These lands are classified under the NFMA as unsuitable for timber production; withdrawn by Congress, however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted by NFMA. Designating legislation for this area would require that the 'other multiple use values' and 'plan goals and objectives' be only those consistent with the purposes for which the Coosa Bald Scenic Area was established.

Successional Stage Management

3.A-012 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

3.A.-013 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, patches of early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain large blocks of late-successional forest.

Wildlife Openings

3.A-014 Wildlife openings that existed prior to Congressional designation may be maintained.

3.A-015 New wildlife openings may be created to further the purposes for which the area was established.

3.B EXPERIMENTAL FORESTS

3.B EXPERIMENTAL FORESTS

This prescription includes two Chief-designated Experimental Forests, both on the Oconee National Forest.

The Hitchiti Experimental Forest in Jones County was formed by proclamation of President Roosevelt on December 7, 1937, and made part of the Oconee NF on September 18, 1964. It is currently managed day-to-day by the Georgia Forestry Commission through an agreement between the GFC and the Forest Service as the Ernst Brender Demonstration Forest. Technically, administrative oversight is by the USFS Southern Forest Experiment Station in Asheville, NC through the project leader of the USFS Forestry Sciences Laboratory on the campus of the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia.

The Scull Shoals Experimental Forest in Greene County was formed by proclamation by the Acting Chief of the Forest Service in December 1961. In the establishment record, Scull Shoals Indian Mounds, Scull Shoals Mill Village, and a 300-foot wide area along the Oconee River were excepted from the designation. Day-to-day administration is by the Oconee Ranger District personnel, but responsibility is shared with the USFS Southern Forest Experiment Station in Asheville, NC through the project leader of the USFS Forestry Sciences Laboratory on the campus of the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia.

EMPHASIS

Experimental forests are managed in accordance with the purpose for which the Forest was established. Lands are dedicated to experimentation and education by implementing national and international research programs with the primary purpose of producing scientific information useful to public and private sector management of the represented ecosystems. An operational situation of minimal constraint on activities carried out for that purpose is desired. Except for required legal compliances, research needs normally receive deference in the event of resource effects conflicts.

DESIRED CONDITION

Tree species composition will vary within the experimental forest. Areas of active management and research activities may be obvious. The landscape character is natural appearing, however the SIO could vary from High (appears intact) to Moderate (appears slightly altered) to Low (appears moderately altered) to Very Low (appears heavily altered), depending on the scenic class. Research may occassionally use high contrasts of form, line, color, or texture in data collection, such as remote data collection instrumentation for a limited duration. Natural appearing managed change occurs, but affects a limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Nonnative invasive plants will be controlled. Forest health activities are applied when necessary.

Management is constrained to remain compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. The recreation use emphasis is on dispersed activities such as hunting, fishing, canoeing, or hiking. Localized development facilitates those uses.

General forest visitors are typically encouraged to visit and learn of the ongoing research and its potential benefits unless that would compromise the validity of research. Local access, especially low standard dead-end roads are typically closed to public traffic. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system

road density may exceed the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. Human activities may be evident in some places. Organized group tours, field demonstrations, and self-guided tours may be available. Visitors will likely see other people in the parts of these areas with motorized access. Trail and access emphasis will depend on the specific conditions of each area. Visitor satisfaction is monitored routinely. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are available quickly and motorized operations are not constrained by Plan direction.

These areas will be characterized by 60 to 80 percent or more of the forest cover being mid- and late-successional forests with a relatively low percentage of acreage old enough for potential old growth. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old occur on up to 10 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Early-successional forest patches vary in size, but many are 20 to 30 acres and sometimes larger to provide optimal conditions for dependent species.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife occur, kept open by mowing, grazing, or burning and occassional newly-created openings are also encountered. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. Response to managed change is typically compared to historic or pre-treatment data for the same site. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

The majority of the Oconee National Forest's existing Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) cluster sites are located on the Hitchiti Experimental Forest. Management direction as provided in the Recovery Plan for this Federally-listed endangered species emphasizes management where the species occurs. Management will continue to maintain and enhance RCW populations until recovery objectives are met.

OBJECTIVES

OBJ-3.B-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in mid- to late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 20 percent of forest acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and 4 to 10 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

OBJ-3.B-02 Thin an annual average of 1,000 acres of pine cover type over the first seven years of Plan implementation.

OBJ-3.B-03 Annually coordinate the management of the Experimental Forests between the Southern Forest Experiment Station through the Forestry Sciences Lab, the Oconee Ranger District, and the Georgia Forestry Commission.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

3.B-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

3.B-002 Federal mineral leases may be permitted and mineral material authorizations may be allowed, if compatible with the purposes for which the experimental forest was established.

Vegetation and Forest Health

3.B-003 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, or for safety or legal reasons.

3.B-004 Recognize that beyond 60 years high hazard littleleaf soils are incapable of supporting sustainable high-quality RCW nesting habitat and reforest to loblolly or shortleaf pine only if necessary to meet RCW foraging habitat requirements.

Facilities, Roads, and Access

3.B-005 System roads may be constructed within the area and total system road density may exceed the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

Fire Management

3.B-006 Temporary use road construction will be permitted, if existing roads are not available for fire suppression activities.

Recreation

3.B-007 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings of RN1, RN2, and Pastoral.

3.B-008 Existing four-wheel-drive roads and existing connecting trails to ATV and motorcycle routes may be allowed if compatible with the purposes for which the experimental forest was established.

Scenery

3.B-009 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	L	L	L	VL	VL

Timber Management

3.B-010 The Hitchiti Experimental Forest is classified as unsuitable for timber production, withdrawn by the Chief of the Forest Service.

3.B-011 The Scull Shoals Experimental Forest is classified as suitable for timber production.

Successional Stage Management

3.B-012 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 10 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

3.B-013 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Protection

3.B-014 On that portion of the Oconee National Forest south of Interstate 20, the requirements of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service January 2003 RCW Recovery Plan and its amendments must be complied with in each management prescription.

3.B-015 Use only two-aged or uneven aged silvicultural systems to regenerate RCW habitat, where native pine (not off-site pine species) forests are present.

3.B-016 Due to high risk of Southern Pine Beetle and littleleaf disease, an 80-year rotation will be used in loblolly and shortleaf pine types.

3.B-017 When the eighty-year rotation option in used, up to 40 square feet of basal area must be retained depending on management intensity level (MIL) status.

3.B-018 Limit regeneration areas in native (not off-site pine species) pine and pine-hardwood stands to 25 acres maximum size in MIL 3 and 4; 40-acre maximum in MIL 1 and 2.

3.B-019 Use even-aged or two-aged silvicultural systems to restore native pine species to suitable sites. All existing trees of the desired species shall be retained except where distribution is clumped and basal area is >70 square feet. These clumps may be thinned to improve habitat conditions.

3.B-020 Limit regeneration areas in off-site pine and pine-hardwood stands to 80 acres in size. Regeneration will be to restore those species that are determined appropriate for that site.

3.B-021 During silvicultural treatments, retain as first priority old, flat-topped relict trees, potential cavity trees, and scarred old pines.

3.B-022 Where uneven-aged management is used to manage RCW habitat, 20 or more trees per acre of pines at least 14" dbh and 60 years of age are retained within foraging habitat.

3.B-023 Where uneven-aged management is used to manage RCW habitat, in active and recruitment clusters retain 5 or more trees per acre of pines at least 120 years of age for longleaf and shortleaf pine, or 100 years of age for loblolly, slash, or pond pine.

3.B-024 Emphasize restoration of native pine types. Pine can be restored at an accelerated rate in areas more than 1.5 miles from active clusters. The 0 – 10 and 0 – 30 year age classes cannot exceed 15% and 40% respectively over the next 20 years. Foraging habitat for recruitment clusters more than 1.5 miles from an active cluster can be reduced by 50%.

3.C ED JENKINS NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

This area was orginally designated as the Springer Mountain National Recreation Area in Public Law 102-217 on December 11, 1991. The name was changed by Public Law 102-456 to Ed Jenkins NRA in honor of Congressman Ed Jenkins. The area includes a portion of the Blue Ridge Wildlife Management Area.

The Lance Creek inventoried roadless area is partially within the EJNRA. This plan provides for the recommendation to Congress of the inclusion of the entire Lance Creek area within the EJNRA.

EMPHASIS

The designating legislation states that this area was created to 'ensure the protection of certain natural, scenic, fish and wildlife, historic and archaeological, wildland and watershed values, and provide for the enhancement of the recreation opportunities associated with these values.' The designating Act also states that the area shall protect, enhance, and promote the public's opportunities for primitive and semiprimitive recreation in the area.

DESIRED CONDITION

The foreground of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (A.T.) encompasses a portion of this management prescription. Within the foreground of the A.T., management practices are designed to protect the A.T. experience, preserve and strengthen the role of volunteers and volunteer organizations, provide opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation experiences, and provide for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, and cultural qualities of the land through which the A.T. passes. Activities within the A.T. foreground are planned and carried out in cooperation with the appropriate A.T. management partner(s). See Management Prescription 4.A. for additional management direction applicable to this corridor.

Management is constrained to remain at least compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. The semi-primitive setting is enhanced as opportunities offer and is emphasized more than Roaded Natural. Recreation opportunities may include both dispersed and developed recreational uses, including nonmotorized recreation opportunities in accordance with the NRA management plan. Developed uses are typically peripheral and associated with open through roads. Developed sites have posted Safety Zones in which hunting is prohibited. Areas more remote from roads are protected from shifting to a more developed recreation setting. Visitors will likely see other people in the parts of these areas with motorized access. Management includes monitoring of use impacts and – if necessary – limitations on group size, designation of dispersed camp sites, closure of over-used areas, reservation systems, fees, and other behavior modification techniques to maintain a high-quality recreation experience or to protect T&E species or habitat, cultural resources, soils, or water quality. The trail and access emphasis will depend on the specific conditions of each area. Outdoor skills are of moderate importance to visitors in these areas, except where knowledge of specialized activities such as canoeing, kayaking, or mountain biking is critical.

Visitors are informed through a variety of media and materials, as well as a limited number and kind of outlets, to expect rustic to basic amenities. Recreation information is available at visitor information outlets in and near the NRA. Signs permit navigation with

3.C
ED JENKINS
NATIONAL
RECREATION
AREA

minimal concern or confusion. Localized information within the NRA is typically a bulletin board but may include seasonal on-site volunteers, campground hosts, or law enforcement personnel. Visitors are expected to be somewhat self-reliant but supplies or services are usually available nearby at private businesses. Visitor satisfaction and expectations are periodically monitored on-site with voluntary response cards and personal contacts. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are typically available in a matter of hours and motorized operations are not constrained by Plan direction.

The landscape character can range from natural evolving, natural appearing, pastoral, cultural, to historic. The SIO will be High to Very High in Scenic Class 1 and 2 areas, and Moderate in scenic class 3 through 7 areas. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change, but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape will only be in those areas with an SIO of Moderate. The deviations will remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed.

Facilities include a mix of structural and non-structural types. Access to the area is by all-weather roads that are passable by passenger car and may be paved. In these areas, existing facilities are well-maintained and new facilities are provided with strong safeguards for the quality of the recreation experience and environmental values. Access to the interior of the area may be by seasonally open roads that are not always suitable for passenger car. They are typically rock or dirt-rock surface. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is incrementally changed in response to visitor demand and expectations but facilities on private lands are not duplicated. Facilities may be staffed during daylight hours during the entire recreation season and, where camping is available, a contact person may be available twenty-four hours a day in season on a volunteer, partnership or similar basis. Security is primarily on a routine patrol basis.

Habitat associations being emphasized include mid- to late-successional deciduous forest associates and bottomland forest associates. Habitat conditions beneficial to mixed mesic associates and mixed xeric associates (primarily xeric oak and xeric oak-pine habitats) are provided. The area may provide habitat conditions suitable for a mix of species. Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium- and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized interior openings of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas up to several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained. The creation of new or expansion of existing wildlife openings may occur. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of

native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-3.C-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forest acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

3.C-001 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within this area.

Minerals and Geology

3.C-002 Federal mineral leases and mineral material authorizations will be handled according to the designating legislation, which states the lands are withdrawn from the operation of all laws pertaining to mineral leasing.

Vegetation and Forest Health

3.C-003 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources provided that pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms and induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem. Preventative actions may also be taken to maintain tree vigor and reduce susceptibility of species in imminent danger of attack, as provided for by the designating legislation.

3.C-004 Salvage is a permitted activity to maintain forest health and new temporary-use road construction may be permitted.

3.C-005 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled by cut-and-remove methods when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established.

3.C-006 Trees may be cut and removed to reduce hazards to visitors, or for safety or legal reasons.

3.C-007 Hazard trees will be cut and removed in both dispersed and developed recreation settings and along trails and roads as necessary.

Recreation

3.C-008 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS setting of SPM, SPNM and Roaded Natural.

3.C-009 OHV use is incompatible with designating legislation and is not permitted.

3.C-010 Within the foreground of the A.T., activities will be planned and carried out in cooperation with the appropriate A.T. management partner(s).

3.C-011 AT approach trails connecting Amicalola Falls State Park with the AT terminus on Springer Mountain and within this prescription will also be managed under management prescription 4.A.

Scenery

3.C-012 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH or H	H	M	M	M	M	M

Facilities, Roads and Access

3.C-013 Within that portion of the Lance Creek inventoried roadless area within this prescription, no management activity that would result in violating roadless criteria at the scale of the entire roadless area is permitted.

3.C-014 System roads may be constructed within the area but total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

Timber Management

3.C-015 These lands are classified under the NFMA as unsuitable for timber production; withdrawn by Congress, however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted by NFMA. Designating legislation for this area would require that the 'other multiple use values' and 'plan goals and objectives' be only those consistent with the purposes for which the Coosa Bald Scenic Area was established.

Successional Stage Management

3.C-016 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

3.C-017 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

3.D PROPOSED NATIONAL RECREATION AREA (ED JENKINS ADDITION)

This area has been proposed as an addition to the EJNRA in order to include the entire Lance Creek roadless area within the NRA, in part because the Regional Forester does not have the authority to re-allocate any of the NRA.

EMPHASIS

This area ensures the protection of the Lance Creek inventoried roadless area and provides for the enhancement of the semi-primitive recreation opportunities associated with the Ed Jenkins National Recreation Area. If these areas are designated as recommended, management will revert to direction under 3.C.

DESIRED CONDITION

The foreground of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (A.T.) encompasses a portion of this management prescription. Within the foreground of the A.T., management practices are designed to protect the A.T. experience, preserve and strengthen the role of volunteers and volunteer organizations, provide opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation experiences, and provide for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, and cultural qualities of the land through which the A.T. passes. Activities within the A.T. foreground are planned and carried out in cooperation with the appropriate A.T. management partner(s). See Management Prescription 4.A. for additional management direction applicable to this corridor.

Management is constrained to remain at least compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. The semi-primitive setting is enhanced as opportunities offer and is protected. Recreation opportunities will be dispersed recreation in a near-wilderness setting. The landscape character is natural evolving, or natural appearing. Areas more remote from roads are protected from shifting to a more developed recreation setting. Visitors may see other people infrequently. Management includes monitoring of use impacts and – if necessary –behavior modification techniques to maintain a high-quality recreation experience or to protect T & E species or habitat, cultural resources, soils, or water quality. Outdoor skills such as map reading, land navigation, and self-reliance are important to visitors in this area.

Visitors are informed through a variety of media and materials, as well as a limited number and kind of outlets, to expect rustic amenities. Recreation information is available at visitor information outlets in and near the NRA. Signs permit navigation with minimal concern or confusion. Localized information within the NRA is typically a bulletin board at trailheads. Visitors are expected to be self-reliant and well-prepared Visitor satisfaction and expectations are periodically monitored on-site with voluntary response cards and personal contacts. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are typically available in a matter of several hours. Motorized operations are constrained to maintain roadless character.

The landscape character is natural evolving or natural appearing. The SIO will be High to Very High in Scenic Class 1 and 2 areas, and Moderate in scenic class 3 through 7 areas. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual

contrasts of natural change, but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape will only be in those areas with an SIO of Moderate. The deviations will remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed.

Facilities are non-structural. Motorized access is only to the periphery of the area and may not be suitable for passenger cars or use in all weather. Security at trailheads or associated developed recreation settings is typically on a routine patrol basis but security in the interior of the area is limited..

Habitat associations being emphasized include mid- to late-successional deciduous forest associates. Habitat conditions beneficial to mixed mesic associates and mixed xeric associates (primarily xeric oak and xeric oak-pine habitats) are also provided. The area may provide habitat conditions suitable for a mix of species. Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium- and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized interior openings of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas up to several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained. The creation of new openings or the expansion of existing wildlife openings may also occur. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

The SIO will be High to Very High in Scenic Class 1 and 2 areas, and Moderate in scenic class 3 through 7 areas. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change, but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape will only be in those areas with an SIO of Moderate. The deviations will remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-3.D-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forest acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

3.D-001 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within this area.

Minerals and Geology

3.D-002 Federal mineral leases and mineral material authorizations will be handled according to the EJNRA designating legislation, which states the lands are withdrawn from the operation of all laws pertaining to mineral leasing.

Vegetation and Forest Health

3.D-003 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was recognized, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources provided that pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms and induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem. Preventative actions may be taken to maintain tree vigor and reduce susceptibility of species in imminent danger of attack, as provided for by the designating legislation.

3.D-004 Salvage is a permitted activity to maintain forest health and new temporary-use road construction may be permitted.

3.D-005 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled by cut-and-remove methods when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established.

3.D-006 Trees may be cut and removed to reduce hazards to visitors, or for safety or legal reasons.

3.D-007 Hazard trees will be cut and removed in both dispersed and developed recreation settings and along trails and roads as necessary.

Recreation

3.D-008 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS setting of SPM or SPNM.

3.D-009 OHV use is prohibited.

3.D-010 Within the foreground of the A.T., activities will be planned and carried out in cooperation with the appropriate A.T. management partner(s).

Scenery

3.D-011 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH or H	H	M	M	M	M	M

Facilities, Roads and Access

3.D-012 Management actions will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of the entire Lance Creek inventoried roadless area.

Timber Management

3.D-013 These lands are classified as unsuitable for timber production; not appropriate, however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, or activities that meet the purposes for which the EJNRA was designated are permitted provided roadless criteria are not violated.

Successional Stage Management

3.D-014 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

3.D-015 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

4.A APPALACHIAN NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL CORRIDOR

This prescription area consists of those lands mapped as the foreground area visible from the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (A.T.) footpath, the Springer Mountain Approach Trail within the Ed Jenkins National Recreation Area, and—as designated on a case-by-case basis—associated trail shelters, overnight use sites, viewpoints, water sources and spur trails. The corridor encompasses approximately 16,000 acres (77.5 miles in length) on the Chattahoochee National Forest. Approximately 13 associated shelters and designated overnight-use sites lie within the Forest on the Toccoa, Brasstown, Chattooga, and Tallulah Ranger Districts.

Additional management direction for the management of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail can be found in:

- Service Directives (FSM, FSH, and supplements)
- Appalachian Trail Design, Construction, and Maintenance (ATC Stewardship Manual, second edition, 2000)
- Appalachian Trail Overnight Use Management Principles
- Checklist for the Location, Construction, and Maintenance of Campsites and Shelters on the Appalachian Trail (ATC Stewardship Series, revised 1989)
- Local Management Plans for the Applachian Trail
- Wilderness Act of 1964, Eastern Wilderness Act of 1975, and specific state Wilderness Acts
- Numerous Memoranda of Agreement and Memoranda of Understanding between the USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, and Appalachian Trail Conference
- Implementation Guide for the Appalachian Trail
- National Trails System Act (PL 90-543, as amended)
- Appalachian Trail Comprehensive Plan
- Landscape Aesthetics (Ag Handbook 701)

The A.T. is administered by the Secretary of the Interior in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, and managed as a partnership among the Forest Service, the Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC), ATC-affiliated local A.T. clubs and the National Park Service (NPS) A.T. Park Office. Management is in accordance with the National Trails System Act and the A.T. Comprehensive Plan utilizing the cooperative management system.

EMPHASIS

Management practices are designed to protect the A.T. experience, preserve and strengthen the role of volunteers and volunteer organizations, provide opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation experiences, and provide for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural and cultural qualities of the land through which the A.T. passes. Lands adjoining the prescription area seen from the A.T. will be managed for multiple use under the provisions of this plan, in a manner which will reasonably harmonize with and be complementary to the A.T. experience.

DESIRED CONDITION

The Appalachian Trail is a path way, continuous from Katahdin in Maine to Springer Mountain, Georgia, traversing the Chattahoochee National Forest for travel on foot

through the wild, scenic, wooded, pastoral, and culturally significant lands of the Appalachian Mountains. The A.T. is usually a simple footpath, purposeful in direction and concept, favoring the heights of land, and located for minimum reliance on construction for protecting the resource. The body of the Trail is provided by the lands it traverses, and its soul is in the living stewardship of the volunteers and workers of the A.T. community.

Views from the A.T. are predominantly forested, sporadically intermixed with meadows, old fields, pastoral valleys and cultural landscapes. Occasionally, the A.T. traverses high elevation balds and openings, which afford hikers unique and outstanding views. The A.T. offers a diversity of topography and a variety of vegetation and animal life exposing the hiker to the entire range of land forms, water features, history, and uses of the land that are found along the Appalachian Mountains.

The prescription area consists of those lands mapped as foreground from the A.T. footpath and designated viewpoints, shelters, campsites, water sources, and spur trails linking these features, utilizing the Scenery Management System. The prescription area has a minimum width of 100 feet on either side of the A.T. footpath for protection from social, aural, and other impacts, but this minimum width should be considered only when the foreground zone does not extend beyond 100 feet on either side of the A.T. footpath.

In addition to this prescription area, the A.T. also passes through prescriptions 1.A, 1.B, 3.C, 4.A, and 4.H. Refer to those prescriptions for Desired Condition and Standards for A.T. management.

The southern terminus of the A.T. at Springer Mountain is in the Ed Jenkins National Recreation Area (Mgmt RX 3.C) on the Chattahoochee National Forest. Both the A.T. and the Ed Jenkins NRA are National Congressional designations. The A.T. management prescription is being held to be completely compatible in intent and practice with the purposes for which the Ed Jenkins was created and the A.T. prescription will apply without modification within the NRA.

Facilities include the A.T. footpath itself, shelters approximately one day's hike apart, designated overnight-use sites, privies, trailhead parking areas, and information boards at road crossings. The footpath itself is designed, constructed, and maintained for foot travel only and to wear lightly on the land. Associated structures are in harmony with the surrounding environment.

Recreation management is designed to provide a variety of opportunities in the most primitive and natural recreation setting possible. Careful acquisition and trail design has allowed an appearance of a more primitive setting than the ROS would predict. Trailheads are designed with sensitivity to scale and character to set the tone for a non-motorized experience. Motorized recreation, bicycles, horses and packstock are not allowed on the A.T. footpath, although there are some rare exceptions (see Standards). Roads within one-half mile of the A.T. are managed with hiker security, safety and A.T. values in mind.

Roads, utility transmission corridors, electronic or communication facilities, or signs of mineral development activity exist or may be seen within the prescription area. The goal, however, is to avoid these types of facilities and land uses to the greatest extent possible and blend facilities which cannot be avoided into the landscape so that they remain visually subordinate.

This prescription area retains a natural, forested or pastoral appearance shaped by both natural processes and humans. Management practices are modified to recognize the nationally-significant aesthetic and recreational values of these lands. Low intensity vegetation management is appropriate to maintain the long term goals and stewardship objectives of the A.T. prescription area. Management activities needed to preserve or

create vistas and desirable open areas are a high priority. Activities are planned and carried out in cooperation with the appropriate A.T. management partner(s).

This prescription area traverses a range of Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes. Management of the A.T. setting will either be consistent with or complement the Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized ROS class. The linear nature of this prescription area is recognized in determining the ROS class.

OBJECTIVES

OBJ-4.A-01 Maintain an Agreement for Sponsored Voluntary Services between each Ranger District and partner Appalachian Trail Club.

STANDARDS

Vegetation and Forest Health

4.A-001 Vegetation in the A.T. prescription area will be managed to enhance the A.T. environment. Allow timber harvest, prescribed burning, wildland fire use, hand tools, power tools, mowing, herbicides, biological controls, and grazing to manage vegetation. Vegetation management activities are limited to:

- Maintaining open areas, old field habitats, and vistas that enhance the scenic qualities of the A.T.;
- Controlling insects and diseases;
- Maintaining or improving threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species habitat;
- Maintaining rare communities, species dependant on disturbance, and wildlife viewing opportunities;
- Meeting trail construction and maintenance needs, including shelters;
- Managing fuels;
- Restoring, enhancing, or mimicking historic fire regimes;
- Controlling non-native invasive vegetation; and
- Providing for public safety or resource protection.

Timber Management

4.A-002 Hauling and skidding within the prescription area will be allowed only if the environmental analysis indicates that this is the only feasible and prudent alternative.

4.A-003 Hauling or skidding along the A.T. footpath or using the footpath for landings or temporary roads is prohibited.

4.A-004 The lands in this prescription area are classified as unsuitable for timber production.

Fire Management

4.A-005 Suppression strategies will strive to minimize impact on A.T. values.

4.A-006 Prohibit heavy equipment line construction on the A.T. footpath, unless necessary for emergency protection of public property and safety.

4.A-007 Implement restorative measures in areas damaged by fire-suppression efforts after prescribed fire or fire-suppression efforts have ceased.

Recreation

4.A-008 Motorized, horse, pack stock, and bicycle use on the A.T. are prohibited. Exceptions include where the A.T. crosses or is located on open Forest Service system roads; other federal, state, county or other public roads; or as needed for management of the A.T.; or for administrative or emergency purposes.

4.A-009 Other uses within the prescription area, including crossings of the A.T., may be considered following coordination with appropriate A.T. partner(s). Locate any authorized uses crossing the A.T. to minimize impacts to the A.T. environment, preferably where impacts already exist.

4.A-010 Identify the A.T. through standard blazes and signs.

4.A-011 Overnight camping will be allowed, unless prohibited by Forest Supervisor's order.

4.A-012 Trail shelters, campsites and privies will be located and maintained at locations where there is a demonstrated need for overnight use.

4.A-013 Reconstruct or relocate existing portions of the A.T. as needed to enhance the recreation experience; protect threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species; protect the health of the ecosystem; or protect heritage resources. Such relocations provide a reasonable level of public safety.

4.A-014 Limit additional development to facilities compatible with the A.T.

Scenery

4.A-015 All management activities will meet or exceed a Scenic Integrity Objective of High.

Minerals

4.A-016 The area is available for oil and gas leasing with a "no-surface-occupancy" stipulation. The prescription area is unavailable for other Federal leasable minerals. When existing leases terminate or expire, new leases will be changed to reflect this standard.

Roads

4.A-017 Authorize new roads within the A.T. prescription area only if entering the prescription area is the only feasible and prudent location.

4.A-018 This prescription includes a portion of the Kelly Ridge inventoried roadless area. Management actions will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of the entire inventoried roadless area.

4.A APPALACHIAN NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL CORRIDOR

Lands and Special Uses

4.A-019 Authorize recreational special-uses only when they do not adversely affect A.T. values and resources as described by the A.T. management prescription. Limit recreation events such as foot races or horseback endurance events to designated crossings only. Only temporary authorizations of one year or less for use of the footpath are allowed due to the probability of changing trail conditions or management needs except for existing permits. Existing permits may be renewed when there is no proposed change in use, or changes in trail conditions or management needs. Permits will not be issued for overnight camping at A.T. shelters or within 300 feet of the footpath.

4.A-020 Issue non-recreational special-use authorizations only where compatible with A.T. management or where there is a demonstrated public need or benefit and where no other reasonable alternatives exist.

4.A-021 Allow agricultural special-use authorizations to maintain open and pastoral spaces.

4.A-022 Do not authorize vendor or peddler permits.

4.A-023 Locate new public utilities and rights-of-way in areas of this management prescription area where major impacts already exist. Limit linear utilities and rights-of-way to a single crossing of the management prescription area, per project.

4.A-024 Require mitigation measures including screening, feathering, and other visual management techniques to mitigate visual and other impacts of new or upgraded utility rights-of-way. Mitigation measures apply to facilities as well as vegetation.

4.A-025 This management prescription area is unsuitable for special-use authorizations for new communication sites and wind generation sites.

4.B.1 MURDER CREEK RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

The research natural area designation is an agency program that pre-dates the Eastern Wilderness Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, or the Endangered Species Act which now accomplishes similar goals. Research Natural Areas are areas set aside by the Chief of the Forest Service as representatives of specific ecosystems. They were set aside for study of natural ecological processes as distinct from Experimental Forests which were to develop and test management practices.

EMPHASIS

The management emphasis would be on scientific research to identify the existing conditions and serve as a baseline to compare what could happen in other forest environments.

DESIRED CONDITION

The research natural area (RNA) and its ecosystems furnish ecological information of value to the Forest Service and society at large. The area continues to be representative of Piedmont bottomland hardwoods.

The landscape character is natural-evolving. Natural change is assumed to be visually acceptable and no active management is directed at moderating visual contrasts. Evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is minimal and will normally be overlooked by most visitors unless specific research equipment is being used that is highly visible. Human-caused change may be specifically mitigated to be made less obvious.

Visitors to the area would experience a natural appearing area, as the primary uses of the area are information collection for scientific research and supervised environmental education. Other compatible use, such as individual nature study, photography, or day hiking, are permissible, unless the use threatens the ecological integrity of the area or the integrity of studies and therefore, its value as a research natural area representative of an important ecosystem. Response of plants and animals to ecological change is typically compared to historic data for the same site and long-term stability in management is desireable. Infrastructure development, such as trails or parking areas, would be constructed only after the involvement of Forest Service research on the need for the project, its compatibility with the areas purpose, and the most appropriate methods for development.

No visitor information is provided to create any specific expectation of amenities. Signs are very limited. Visitors are expected to be rather skilled in the outdoors, self-reliant and well prepared. Visitors expectations and satisfaction will be monitored.

Facilities are typically administrative roads and trails. Existing facilities are maintained in serviceable condition with the emphasis on resource protection. They are not improved beyond their original design. In these areas no new facilities are provided. Access may be restricted to foot travel only, or roads may be open only seasonally. Roads may require high-clearance vehicles. Recreation uses are mostly dispersed, such as hunting and fishing.

Natural processes are the primary influence on vegetation. Predominately late-successional forest communities will develop throughout the area, with canopy gaps and

4.B.1 MURDER CREEK RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

occasional large openings created by natural disturbance. Invasive nonnative species occur only as transients and can be eradicated where feasible.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife are not maintained, but are allowed to succeed to forest. In some cases, existing openings may be obliterated through tree planting and elimination of nonnative species. New permanent wildlife openings are not created. Native vegetation response or restoration studies may create openings if needed.

This area will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests, with little to no human-caused forest openings. Natural processes such as ice storms or windstorms, insects, diseases, and lightening fires are the primary influences to vegetation. These processes will periodically remove the canopy and result in large and small areas of young and small trees. The average aggregate area affected will be within the range of approximately 2 percent to 3 percent per decade at a landscape scale of tens of thousands of acres or more and therefore could be less within this smaller area. The range of canopy breaks includes the common occurrence of small gaps created by individual tree mortality, to frequent insect or disease-killed groups up to approximately one hundred acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

The protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species.

There are no wildlife habitat objectives for this prescription. Wildlife habitats are characterized by nearly unbroken tree canopy and old forest. Canopy removal occurs by natural events on about 2 to 3 percent of area per decade. Forest succession as a result of natural changes is gradually moving composition toward more tolerant species. Large downed woody material, standing snags, and tree cavities are on a trend of increase. High-quality early-successional habitat rarely occurs, and then usually as a result of a combination of tree mortality followed by wildfire.

Streams and water bodies are not managed except in cases where aquatic systems need protection or restoration. Examples include an invasion of a nonnative aquatic organism or natural events such as floods, tree mortality, blow-down, or excessive soil loss. Streams or water bodies are not regularly inventoried or monitored, unless needed on a sample basis for an overall monitoring program to improve the characterization of larger scale conditions or trends, or if a known T&E species occurs. Water-related studies are one of the benefits of the area such as stream dynamics in Piedmont streams and riparian areas.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVES

OBJ-4.B.1-01 Annually coordinate the management of the Murder Creek Research Natural Area between the Southern Forest Experiment Station through the Forestry Sciences Lab and the Oconee Ranger District.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

4.B.1-001 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas. Other special uses are authorized if consistent and compatible with the goals and objectives of the area.

Minerals and Geology

4.B.1-002 Using a no-surface occupancy stipulation, Federal mineral leases may be permitted if compatible with the purposes for which the RNA was established.

4.B.1-003 Mineral material authorizations would not be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

4.B.1-004 Specimen collection is not allowed unless authorized.

4.B.1-005 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources provided that pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms and induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem.

Fire Management

4.B.1-006 Use the minimum amount of ground, vegetation, or stream disturbance that is effective to achieve fire management objectives.

4.B.1-007 Use of handtools for wildfire suppression is preferred, if effective.

4.B.1-008 Coordination is required with the Athens Forestry Sciences Lab or the Southern Experiment Station when planning a prescribed burn project within the RNA.

Recreation

4.B.1-009 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed an ROS setting of SPNM.

4.B.1-010 This area is closed to OHV use.

4.B.1 MURDER CREEK RESEARCH NATURAL AREA

Scenery

4.B.1-011 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH	VH	VH	NA	NA	NA	NA

Facilities, Roads, and Access

4.B.1-012 Do not construct new open interior roads.

Timber Management

4.B.1-013 This area is classified as unsuitable for timber production, withdrawn by the Chief of the Forest Service.

4.D BOTANICAL - ZOOLOGICAL AREAS

EMPHASIS

These lands serve as a network of core areas for conservation of significant elements of biological diversity. They are for the purpose of; (a) perpetuating or increasing the numbers of existing individual plant or animal species that are of national, regional, or state significance as identified on TES lists; and/or (b) to perpetuate plant and animal communities that are unique on National Forest at the scale of their ecological section or subsection unit but not rare at regional scale.

DESIRED CONDITION

Desired conditions include the following at each site: (1) protection of threatened, endangered, sensitive, or locally rare species from human taking or human-caused detrimental habitat changes; (2) viable and increasing populations of threatened, endangered, sensitive, or locally rare species; and (3) ecosystems functioning primarily with natural change.

These sites can be nominated for placement on natural area registries maintained by the state chapters of The Nature Conservancy. These voluntary agreements recognize that protection and management of natural areas support rare species and significant natural communities. Ideally, natural processes within these areas proceed unencumbered; however, in some cases, the prevailing environmental conditions have changed to prevent, or at least hinder, natural processes.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife are not maintained, but are allowed to succeed to forest. In some cases, existing openings may be obliterated through tree planting and elimination of nonnative species. New permanent wildlife openings are not created.

The landscape character ranges from natural evolving to natural appearing. Natural processes appear to be the only agents of change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is minimal, and will normally be overlooked by most visitors. Human-caused change may be specifically mitigated to be made less obvious. Sometimes cultural features are present. The SIO ranges from Very High to Moderate. In the Moderate SIO, the landscape character appears slightly altered, but deviations remain subordinate to the landscape character.

Access is limited to existing roads and trails generally outside the perimeter of the area. Where public access is unrestricted, interpretive information may be available to develop understanding of the importance of protecting the plant and animal communities of the area. New trail sections to link existing trails or for education and interpretation are considered on a case-by-case basis. Recreation opportunities are limited to those activities that do not adversely affect the protected resource and may be stopped when monitoring demonstrates unacceptable change.

Signs are very limited or non-existent. Visitors are expected to be rather skilled in the outdoors, self-reliant and well prepared. Visitors' expectations and satisfaction will be monitored. Facilities are typically roads and trails, and structures are rare. Where interpretive opportunities or day use recreation has been determined to be acceptable,

4.D BOTANICAL – ZOOLOGICAL AREAS

facilities such as boardwalks or observation decks may be infrequently seen. Existing facilities are maintained in serviceable condition with the emphasis on resource protection. They are not improved beyond their original design. In these areas no new facilities are provided except to further the purposes of this prescription. Access may be restricted to foot travel only, or roads may be open only seasonally. Roads may require high-clearance vehicles. Unneeded roads would be decommissioned.

These areas will be characterized by mid- to late-successional forests, with little to no human-caused forest openings. Many small gaps and occasional large openings of early-successional forest habitat may be created through natural disturbances. Approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover would be mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests, with little to no human-caused forest openings. Natural processes such as ice storms or windstorms, insects, diseases, and lightening fires are the primary influences to vegetation. These processes will periodically remove the canopy and result in large and small areas of young and small trees. The range of canopy breaks includes the common occurrence of small gaps created by individual tree mortality, to frequent insect or disease-killed groups.

All areas will be protected from human-caused detrimental habitat change, the taking of threatened or endangered species, and the collection of living plants or animals unless such collections are for the purpose of achieving the stated management goals.

There are no wildlife habitat objectives for this prescription. Wildlife habitats are characterized by nearly unbroken tree canopy and old forest. Forest succession as a result of natural changes is gradually moving composition toward more tolerant species such as white pine, hemlock, beech, rhododendron, mountain laurel, red maple, sourwood, hornbeam and blackgum. Large downed woody material, standing snags, and tree cavities are on a trend of increase. High-quality early-successional habitat rarely occurs and then usually as a result of a combination of tree mortality followed by wildfire.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Surveys of proposed, endangered, and threatened species are conducted periodically for population health, and trends. Data collection may be to individual species level and may include spatial distribution data referenced from a recoverable, permanent, geo-referenced marker. Occupied habitats and, where feasible, populations are also geo-referenced as polygons. Active management to maintain habitat or increase the numbers or health of known proposed endangered and threatened populations commonly occurs with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. Where active management is used, formal, quantitative pre-treatment inventory and post-treatment monitoring and reporting is done where study results are needed. Where feasible, managed change is compared both to historic data for the same site and to comparable un-treated control areas in the same time period. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the forest. Translocation of proposed, endangered, and threatened species to these areas infrequently occurs. Research on PETS species, control of nonnative invasive species, and restoration of native ecosystems are high priorities on these areas. There is a high level of collaboration with USFWS, universities, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, sister Forests and others to leverage knowledge and experience. Visitor controls are important and may be rather restrictive.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

4.D-001 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas. Other special uses are authorized if consistent and compatible with the goals and objectives of these areas.

Minerals and Geology

4.D-002 Using stipulations such as no-surface-occupancy and controlled surface use to protect the area, Federal mineral leases may be allowed.

4.D-003 Mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect the area may be permitted.

Vegetation and Forest Health

4.D-004 Specimen collection is not allowed unless authorized.

4.D-005 Insect and disease outbreaks shall be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, or for safety or legal reasons, provided that pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms and induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem. Eradication of newly discovered nonnative pests shall occur. Control of established nonnative pests shall occur. Actions need to be consistent with Forest Service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and SPB EIS.

Fire Management

4.D-006 Prescribed fire may be used if compatible with the objectives of the area.

4.D-007 Use the minimum amount of ground, vegetation, or stream disturbance that is effective to achieve fire management objectives.

Recreation

4.D-008 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1, RN2, SPM, and SPNM.

4.D-009 This area is closed to OHV, horse and bike use, except on pre-existing routes.

Scenery

4.D-010 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH or H	H	M	M	M	M	M

Facilities, Roads, and Access

4.D-011 No new system roads will be constructed.

Timber Management

4.D-012 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production, not appropriate; however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple use values, and activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Protection

4.D-013 On that portion of the Oconee National Forest south of Interstate 20, the requirements of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service January 2003 RCW Recovery Plan and its amendments must be complied with in each management prescription.

4.E.1 CULTURAL/HERITAGE AREAS

Cultural/heritage areas on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests include:

Chenocetah Mountain Tower	Scull Shoals Mound Complex
Cox-Mathis House	Scull Shoals Mill Village
Dug Gap Confederate Breastworks	Track Rock Site

EMPHASIS

Cultural/Heritage Areas are managed to highlight and protect unique heritage resources for public understanding and appreciation of the influence of human history on the forest ecosystem. The management focus is on protection and interpretation.

DESIRED CONDITION

Sites will be preserved and protected as appropriate in accordance with the law. Interpretative opportunities can occur if adequate protection to sites can be achieved. The local landscape may be restored to historic appearance.

These areas are characterized by a variety of forested and nonforested communities, often showing a great deal of human influence. The landscape character could range from natural evolving to historic.

The landscape character is a mixture of natural evolving, natural appearing, historic, pastoral, and cultural landscapes. Historic landscape character expresses valued historic features that represent events and periods of human activity in the landscape. Cultural landscape character expresses built structures and landscape features that display the dominant attitudes and beliefs of specific human cultures. Pastoral landscape character expresses dominant human created pastures, "meadows," and associated structures, reflecting valued historic land uses and lifestyles. Natural processes are the primary agents of change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural appearing managed change occurs depending on scenic class, but affects a limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low to moderate contrast (slightly altered) and therefore compatible with the SIO. Evidence of human intervention on the appearance of the landscape is infrequent and visually subordinant to the landscape character.

Day-use recreation opportunities focus primarily on public education and interpretation of the cultural/heritage resources. Other appropriate recreational activities include hiking, bird-watching, photography, hunting, and fishing. Visitors do not need to rely heavily on physical abilities or primitive recreation skills in developed areas. The opportunity to encounter other people is high. Visitors may, however, need to rely on their own physical abilities for hiking and fording small streams in the more wooded or remote sites. Reliance on primitive recreation skills is low.

A variety of media and materials are used to provide visitors basic information. Acquiring the most complete and current information typically requires contacting a Forest Service employee or visiting a Forest Service office. Basic information is available at visitor information outlets in and near the Forest. Signs permit navigation with minimal concern or confusion. Visitors are not expected to be very self-reliant, and supplies or services are usually available nearby at private businesses. Visitor satisfaction and expectations are

4.E.1 CULTURAL/ HERITAGE AREAS

periodically monitored on-site with voluntary response cards and personal contacts. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are available quickly and motorized operations are not constrained by Plan direction.

Facilities are designed with sensitivity to character, scale, and color in an effort to complement the surroundings at each specific site. Facilities at the more developed sites may include parking areas, trailheads, trails, bulletin boards, and interpretive kiosks or centers as well as infrastructure to support these sites. Trails may be highly developed where appropriate, including hardened trails to provide a high level of accessibility for persons of all abilities. The more remote cultural/heritage sites may have only a nonmotorized hiking or interpretive trail with no additional facilities for visitors' comfort. New and existing mountain bike and horse trails are analyzed to determine if negative impacts are occurring to the cultural resource, the historic integrity of the site, or interpretation of that resource.

Facilities include a mix of structural and non-structural types. Access is by all-weather roads that are passable by passenger car and may be paved. Existing facilities are well-maintained and new facilities are provided with strong safeguards for the quality of the recreation experience and environmental values. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is incrementally changed in response to visitor demand and expectations without duplicating facilities on private lands. Facilities may be staffed during daylight hours of the entire recreation season. A contact person may be available twenty-four hours a day in season on a volunteer, partnership or similar basis where camping is provided. Security is primarily on a routine patrol basis.

Nonnative invasive plants will be controlled, and storm-damaged as well as hazardous trees will be removed if negative impacts to the cultural resource can be avoided. Where feasible, restore representative areas to a vegetative condition appropriate to the time periods.

There is no quantitative objective for wildlife habitats in this prescription. Wildlife habitats are usually characterized by nearly unbroken tree canopy and old forest. Canopy removal occurs by natural events on about 2 to 3 percent of area per decade. As a result of natural changes, forest succession is gradually moving composition toward more tolerant species such as white pine, hemlock, beech, rhododendron, mountain laurel, red maple, sourwood, hornbeam and blackgum. Large downed woody material, standing snags, and tree cavities are on a trend of increase. High-quality early-successional habitat rarely occurs, and then usually as a result of a combination of tree mortality followed by wildfire.

Existing old fields, herbaceous openings, woodlands, savannas or other historic landscape types may be present and maintained, especially as a feature of a restored historic landscape. Creation of openings as a restored landscape may also occur. Openings are not created primarily for wildlife. Native species are emphasized when establishing vegetation unless used as an interpretitive feature of cultural ecology showing how humans have moved and used plants.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically

basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

4.E.1-001 All heritage resources within the areas will be protected from vandalism and overuse.

4.E.1-002 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas.

Minerals and Geology

4.E.1-003 No mineral activities would be allowed, including 'rockhounding.'

Vegetation and Forest Health

4.E.1-004 The collection of living plants or animals, and artifacts will be prohibited, unless such collections are for the purpose of achieving the stated management goals.

4.E.1-005 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, or for safety or legal reasons.

4.E.1-006 Eradication of established nonnative pests or plants may be considered.

4.E.1-007 Hazard trees could be felled in areas occupied by humans (i.e., roads and picnic sites).

Recreation

4.E.1-008 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings of RN1, RN2, SPM, and SPNM.

4.E.1-009 These areas would be closed to OHV use.

4.E.1-010 Do not develop new horse trails within the area, and phase out existing horse use, except that horse access to the boundary or to a designated location within the area as part of a larger horse trail system is permissible.

4.E.1-011 Do not develop new bike trails within the area and phase out existing bike use, except that bike access to the boundary or to a designated location within the area as part of a larger bike trail system is permissible.

Scenery

4.E.1-012 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH or H	H	M	M	M	M	M

Facilities, Roads, and Access

4.E.1-013 Construction of facilities for support of scientific study, interpretation, or protection are permitted.

Timber Management

4.E.1-014 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production, not appropriate; however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, and activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

4.F SCENIC AREAS

EMPHASIS

Scenic areas are managed to protect and enhance the outstanding natural beauty, special ecological features, watershed integrity, mature forest habitat, scenic recreation opportunities, and other distinctive values for which they were selected. Forest health is maintained to protect the values for which the area was established, including scenery and recreation.

DESIRED CONDITION

The landscape character is natural appearing with an intact, continuous forest canopy. Occasional gaps may occur in the canopy from the results of natural disturbances or management activities needed for wildlife species viability. Old-growth forest communities become part of the area over time. Understory vegetation includes a variety of native deciduous and evergreen flowering shrubs and wildflowers.

These areas are managed with a focus on scenic values. In High SIO areas, activities may only repeat attributes of form, line, color and texture found in the existing landscape character.

Natural appearing managed change occurs, but affects a very limited area. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change, but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is rare.

Hiking, mountain biking, and horse trails may be present in the prescription area. Visitors enjoy primarily a natural setting; however, visitors are not isolated from sights and sounds of other human activity. The opportunity to encounter other visitors is high at parking areas, pullouts, and overlooks, but may be moderate to low on trails away from concentrated use areas. Some trails may be highly developed, including hardened trails for accessibility to persons with all levels of abilities.

Visitors are informed through a variety of media and materials, as well as a limited number and kind of outlets, to expect basic amenities. Acquiring the most complete and current information typically requires contacting a Forest Service employee or visiting a Forest Service office. Basic information is available at visitor information outlets in and near the Forest. Signs permit navigation with minimal concern or confusion. Visitors are not expected to be very self-reliant and supplies or services are usually available nearby at private businesses. Visitor satisfaction and expectations are routinely monitored on-site with voluntary response cards and personal contacts. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are available quickly and motorized operations are not constrained by Plan direction.

Facilities include a mix of structural and non-structural types. Access is by all-weather roads that are passable by passenger car and may be paved. In these areas, existing facilities are well-maintained and new facilities are provided with strong safeguards for the quality of the recreation experience and environmental values. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is incrementally changed in response to

4.F SCENIC AREAS

visitor demand and expectations but facilities on private lands are not duplicated. Facilities may be staffed during daylight hours during the entire recreation season and, where camping is available, a contact person may be available twenty-four hours a day in season on a volunteer, partnership or similar basis. Security is primarily on a routine patrol basis.

Vegetation manipulation may be used for scenic enhancement, such as the creation of vistas, creating parklike effects, enhancing fall color species, and limbing up trees. Enhancement activities could create openings for viewing wildlife, maintaining developed recreation facilities, or providing habitat to contribute to species viability including threatened, endangered, sensitive, or locally rare species habitat Uneven-aged forest communities will develop throughout the area including large, medium, and small patches of old growth forest communities.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately 30 acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forest conditions. High-elevation, early-successional habitats will be provided for species dependent on that habitat association.

Permanent openings are maintained, and the creation or expansion of wildlife openings may occur. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. Priority of heritage resource inventory areas within the scenic designation will focus on known heritage resources, probability of the area containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-4.F-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forest acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

4.F-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

4.F-002 Using stipulations such as no-surface-occupancy and controlled surface use to protect the area, Federal mineral leases may be allowed.

4.F-003 Mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect the area may be permitted.

Vegetation and Forest Health

4.F-004 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was allocated, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources.

4.F-005 Trees may be cut and removed to reduce hazards to visitors, or for safety or legal reasons.

4.F-006 Hazard trees will be cut and removed in both dispersed and developed recreation settings and along trails and roads as necessary.

Fire Management

4.F-007 Prescribed fire may be utilized for the benefit of the purpose of forest health, hazard reduction, and wildlife management.

Recreation

4.F-008 Area will be managed to meet or exceed ROS setting of RN1.

4.F-009 This area is closed to OHV use.

4.F SCENIC AREAS

Scenery

4.F-010 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	H	H	H	H	H

Facilities, Roads, and Access

4.F-011 System roads may be constructed within the area but total open system road density remains below the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

Timber Management

4.F-012 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production; not appropriate, however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

Successional Stage Management

4.F-013 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

4.F-014 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, patches of early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain large blocks of late-successional forest.

4.F.1 SCENIC AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

These areas have a high scenic integrity objective relative to their surroundings and are also with designated Wildlife Management Areas.

EMPHASIS

The management emphasis would be to protect the unique qualities and natural beauty of seen areas while allowing vegetative manipulation for scenery and wildlife habitats.

DESIRED CONDITION

The area is managed with a focus on scenic and wildlife values. The landscape is natural appearing with a predominately continuous forest canopy. Gaps may occur in the canopy from the results of natural disturbances or from management activities to provide wildlife openings. Pockets of old-growth forest communities become part of the area over time.

The primary landscape character is natural appearing with natural processes the dominant agents of change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural-appearing managed change occurs, but affects a very limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is rare.

Visitors may enjoy fishing, hunting, scenic driving, photography, wildlife viewing, hiking, or horseback riding. Visitors enjoy a natural setting. However, visitors may encounter sights and sounds of other human activity and motorized vehicles. The opportunity to encounter other visitors is high at parking areas, pullouts, and overlooks, but may be moderate to low on trails away from congregated use areas. At points of highly developed recreational use, visitors take on low risk and are not challenged to rely on their own physical abilities and outdoor skills. Once away from the more developed portions of the scenic area, opportunities for solitude are available, and visitors may take on some risk and be challenged to rely on their own personal physical abilities and primitive recreational skills.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Visitor's expectations and satisfaction are monitored periodically. Search and rescue is not readily available. When needed, motorized operations are usually constrained by requirements for special case-by-case permissions. Environmental effects of recovery operations are planned to be minimal and promptly rehabilitated.

Facilities are designed to fit the character of the specific sites where they are located. They might include roads, pullouts, overlooks, parking areas, trailheads, bulletin boards, interpretive kiosks, rail fences, signs, rest rooms, and picnic sites. Trails may be developed. Facilities are primarily non-structural; for example, roads, trails, tables, tent pads, etc. Structures are uncommon. Access may be possible by passenger car in good weather, but roads are not designed or maintained for them. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological

4.F.1 SCENIC AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

section. In these areas existing facilities are maintained above a resource protection level but without a strong emphasis on visitor expectations. Capacity of facilities is typically low and they are rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities.

Vegetation manipulation activities may be used for scenic enhancement or rehabilitation, to maintain wildlife openings, to provide wildlife viewing opportunities, or to maintain developed recreation facilities. Small canopy gaps are created through natural disturbance. Occasional large openings of early successional habitat may be created through natural disturbance. Uneven-aged forest communities will develop throughout the area including large, medium, and small patches of old-growth forest communities.

Natural processes and humans influence vegetation. The mix and types of forest communties will depend on the land type associations in which this prescription is applied.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, patches of early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions may be clustered or scattered on the landscape to maintain large blocks of late-successional forest.

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forested conditions. Management to protect rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species. Habitat for a broad mix of species, including demand species, will also be provided.

Existing old fields may be present and maintained. Permanent wildlife openings are maintained, and the creation or expansion of wildlife openings may occur. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas within the

scenic prescription will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-4.F.1-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forest acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

4.F.1-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

4.F.1-002 Using stipulations such as no-surface-occupancy and controlled surface use to protect the area, Federal mineral leases may be allowed.

4.F.1-003 Mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect the area may be permitted.

Vegetation and Forest Health

4.F.1-004 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources.

4.F.1-005 Trees may be cut and removed to reduce hazards to visitors, or for safety or legal reasons.

4.F.1-006 Hazard trees will be cut and removed in both dispersed and developed recreation settings and along trails and roads as necessary.

Fire Management

4.F.1-007 Prescribed fire may be utilized for the benefit of the purpose of forest health, hazard reduction, and wildlife management.

Recreation

4.F.1-008 Area will be managed to meet or exceed ROS setting of RN1.

4.F.1-009 Existing routes designated for four-wheel-drive vehicles would be allowed on a case-by-case basis.

4.F.1-010 Existing connecting trails to ATV and motorcycle routes would be allowed on a case-by-case basis. OHV systems are not an emphasis.

4.F.1 SCENIC AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

Scenery

4.F.1-011 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	H	H	H	H	H

Facilities, Roads, and Access

4.F.1-012 System roads may be constructed within the area but total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

4.F.1-013 This prescription includes portions of the Boggs Creek and Miller Creek inventoried roadless areas. Management actions in any one of them will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of each entire inventoried roadless area.

Timber Management

4.F.1-014 The lands in this prescription are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Successional Stage Management

4.F.1-015 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

4.F.1-016 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, patches of early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain large blocks of late-successional forest.

4.F.2 REGIONAL FORESTER DESIGNATED SCENIC AREAS (PRE-1985)

The name of each Regional Forester Designated Scenic Areas on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests, their original designation acreage, and the date each was designated are listed below. All these areas are on the Chattahoochee National Forest. Acres allocated with this plan may exceed the original designation.

Name	Designated Acres	Designation Date
Anna Ruby Falls	1,600	January 4, 1964
Coleman River	330	April 12, 1960
Cooper's Creek	1,200	February 25, 1960
DeSoto Falls	650	February 25, 1963
High Shoals	170	June 17, 1957
Keown Falls	230	November 14, 1962

EMPHASIS

Scenic areas designated by the Regional Forester are managed to protect and enhance the outstanding natural beauty, special ecological features, watershed integrity, mature forest habitat, scenic recreation opportunities, and other distinctive values for which they were designated. Forest health is maintained to protect the values for which the area was established, including scenery and recreation.

DESIRED CONDITION

The landscape character is natural appearing with an intact, continuous forest canopy. Occasional gaps may occur in the canopy from the results of natural disturbances or management activities needed for wildlife species viability. Old growth forest communities become part of the area over time. Understory vegetation includes a variety of native deciduous and evergreen flowering shrubs and wildflowers.

These areas are managed with a focus on scenic values. In High SIO areas, activities may only repeat attributes of form, line, color and texture found in the existing landscape character.

Natural appearing managed change occurs, but affects a very limited area. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change, but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is rare.

Hiking, mountain biking, and horse trails may be present in the prescription area. Visitors enjoy primarily a natural setting; however, visitors are not isolated from sights and sounds of other human activity. The opportunity to encounter other visitors is high at parking areas, pullouts, and overlooks, but may be moderate to low on trails away from concentrated use areas. Some trails may be highly developed, including hardened trails for accessibility to persons with all levels of abilities.

Visitors are informed through a variety of media and materials, as well as a limited number and kind of outlets, to expect basic amenities. Acquiring the most complete and current information typically requires contacting a Forest Service employee or visiting a Forest Service office. Basic information is available at visitor information outlets in and

4.F.2 REGIONAL FORESTER DESIGNATED SCENIC AREAS (PRE-1985)

near the Forest. Signs permit navigation with minimal concern or confusion. Visitors are not expected to be very self-reliant and supplies or services are usually available nearby at private businesses. Visitor satisfaction and expectations are routinely monitored on-site with voluntary response cards and personal contacts. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are available quickly and motorized operations are not constrained by Plan direction.

Facilities include a mix of structural and non-structural types. Access is by all-weather roads that are passable by passenger car and may be paved. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density is at a low level in comparison with the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. In these areas, existing facilities are well-maintained and new facilities are provided with strong safeguards for the quality of the recreation experience and environmental values. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is incrementally changed in response to visitor demand and expectations but facilities on private lands are not duplicated. Facilities may be staffed during daylight hours during the entire recreation season and, where camping is available, a contact person may be available twenty-four hours a day in season on a volunteer, partnership or similar basis. Security is primarily on a routine patrol basis.

Vegetation manipulation may be used for scenic enhancement, such as the creation of vistas, creating parklike effects, enhancing fall color species, and limbing up trees. Enhancement activities could create openings for viewing wildlife, maintaining developed recreation facilities, or providing habitat to contribute to species viability including threatened, endangered, sensitive, or locally rare species habitat Uneven-aged forest communities will develop throughout the area including large, medium, and small patches of old growth forest communities.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately 30 acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forest conditions. High-elevation, early-successional habitats will be provided for species dependent on that habitat association.

Permanent openings are maintained, and the creation or expansion of wildlife openings may occur. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. Priority of heritage resource inventory areas within the scenic prescription will focus on known heritage resources, probability of the area containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-4.F.2-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forest acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

4.F.2-001 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas.

Minerals and Geology

4.F.2-002 Federal mineral leases may be allowed only with a no-surface-occupancy stipulation. No mineral material authorizations are permitted for private or commercial use.

Vegetation and Forest Health

4.F.2-003 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources provided that pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms and induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem.

4.F.2-004 Trees may be cut and removed to reduce hazards to visitors, or for safety or legal reasons.

4.F.2-005 Hazard trees will be cut and removed in both dispersed and developed recreation settings and along trails and roads as necessary.

Fire Management

4.F.2-006 Prescribed fire may be utilized for the benefit of the purpose of forest health, hazard reduction, and wildlife management.

4.F.2 REGIONAL FORESTER DESIGNATED SCENIC AREAS (PRE-1985)

Recreation

4.F.2-007 Area will be managed to meet or exceed ROS setting of RN1.

4.F.2-008 This area is closed to OHV use.

Scenery

4.F.2-009 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	H	H	H	H	H

Timber Management

4.F.2-010 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production; not appropriate; however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

Successional Stage Management

4.F.2-011 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

4.F.2-012 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, patches of early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain large blocks of late-successional forest.

4.H FOREST-DESIGNATED OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE STREAMS

The following streams (or stream segments) on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests are Forest-designated outstandingly remarkable streams:

Broad River – Middle Fork
Canada Creek
Cedar Creek
Chattahoochee River
Cochran's Creek
Coleman River
Conasauga River
Cooper Creek
Corbin Creek
Dukes/Dodd/Davis Creeks
High Shoals Creek
Falling Creek
Jack's River
Moccasin Creek
Murder Creek
Oconee River
Overflow Creek
Panther/Davidson Creeks
Raper Creek/Soquee River
Soquee River – L. Fork
Tallulah River
Toccoa River

EMPHASIS

River/stream segments and associated corridors are managed to protect and perpetuate their unique values. The recreational opportunities are characteristic of, and in harmony with, the natural setting of the individual river/stream segments. Management is similar to designated or recommended scenic segments of wild and scenic rivers.

DESIRED CONDITION

The recreational river corridor provides river-oriented recreation in an attractive natural setting. The river is readily accessible by roads and trails. Roads may parallel the river for stretches.

The foreground of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (A.T.) encompasses a portion of this management prescription. Within the foreground of the A.T., management practices are designed to protect the A.T. experience, preserve and strengthen the role of volunteers and volunteer organizations, provide opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation experiences, and provide for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, and cultural qualities of the land through which the A.T. passes. Activities within the A.T. foreground are planned and carried out in cooperation with the appropriate A.T. management partner(s). See Management Prescription 4.A. for additional management direction applicable to this corridor.

The landscape character will be natural appearing, including cultural features and processes. There is evidence of human activity along the rivers. Visitors enjoy a natural appearing setting with a range of human-made recreational developments. Utility, roads or railroad corridors may be seen. Facilities remain visually subordinate to the natural landscape. Scenic Integrity Objectives will range from High to Moderate. In High SIO areas, activities may only repeat attributes of form, line, color and texture found in the existing landscape character. In Moderate SIO areas, the valued landscape character appear slightly altered.

4.H FOREST-DESIGNATED OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE STREAMS

Natural-appearing managed change occurs but affects a very limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time.

Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change. There is a low need for visitors to rely on their physical abilities and primitive recreation skills within these areas. The sights and sounds of other visitors are evident, and opportunities to encounter other visitors are high. Non-motorized trails may be highly developed, including hardened trails for a high level of accessibility for persons with all levels of abilities. Improvements will be subordinate to the river's outstandingly remarkable values. Recreational river visitors are encouraged to "pack it in and pack it out" and to "leave no trace." Regulations are necessary to protect resources and visitors. Facilities may include parking areas, trailheads, bulletin boards, interpretive kiosks, signs, restrooms, canoe/raft launches, fishing platforms, picnic sites, etc.

Trash receptacles are provided at parking areas and high-use areas. Facilities are designed to fit the character of the specific sites where they are located. The recreational opportunities are in a roaded natural setting.

Visitors are informed through a variety of media and materials, as well as a limited number and kind of outlets, to expect basic amenities. Acquiring the most complete and current information typically requires contacting a Forest Service employee or visiting a Forest Service office. Basic information is available at visitor information outlets in and near the Forest. Signs permit navigation with minimal concern or confusion. Visitors are not expected to be very self-reliant and supplies or services are usually available nearby at private businesses. Visitor satisfaction and expectations are routinely monitored on-site with voluntary response cards and personal contacts. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are available quickly and motorized operations are not constrained by Plan direction.

Facilities are generally comparable to designated scenic sections of Wild and Scenic Rivers, unless the stream is not eligible for that classification due to factors beyond Forest Service control. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains at a low to average level in comparison with the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. Sediment does not reach streams from road or trail systems.

Vegetation is influenced both by natural processes and humans. Prescribed fire, commercial timber harvest, and noncommercial felling of trees may be used for scenic enhancement or rehabilitation to provide wildlife-viewing or wildlife-hunting opportunities; maintain developed recreation facilities; improve threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species habitat; restore native vegetative communities; restore riparian ecosystems; reduce unnatural fuel buildups; or control nonnative invasive vegetation. Mature forests and older stands in various stages of climax canopy development and decline dominate habitat conditions.

Management of wildlife/aquatic habitats is for the purpose of enhancing the outstandingly remarkable values of the area. Management activities would include efforts to enhance the fisheries resource, restore native vegetative communities, restore riparian ecosystems, or control nonnative invasive vegetation.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present, maintained, and expanded and new openings may be created. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. Priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, probability of containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as riverbanks, trails, and campsites.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

4.H-001 Use renewal of special use permits as an opportunity to strengthen protections for outstandingly remarkable values.

4.H-002 Other special uses, like outfitter/guide permits will not be issued until an assessment has been made of their potential effect on wild and scenic river system suitability.

4.H-003 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Geology and Minerals

4.H-004 Personal use mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect the scenic character may be permitted.

Vegetation and Forest Health

4.H-005 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the outstandingly remarkable values for which these areas are recognized, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources; provided that, (a) pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms, (b) induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem, and (c) not preclude future consderation for addition to the national wild and scenic river system.

Fire Management

4.H-006 Natural ignition fires are permitted to play a natural role within parameters identified in an approved fire management prescription.

4.H-007 Fire can be used if the outstandingly remarkable values of the stream can be protected.

Recreation

4.H-008 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed the ROS setting of Roaded Natural.

4.H-009 Do not authorize new designated OHV trails. Allow OHV only on existing designated trails or open roads in the river corridor.

4.H-010 Within the foreground of the A.T., activities will be planned and carried out in cooperation with the appropriate A.T. management partner(s).

Scenery

4.H-011 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	M	M	M	M	M

Facilities, Roads, and Access

4.H-012 New road construction is allowed to provide recreational access, administrative use, or emergency operations consistent with the outstandingly remarkable values of the area.

4.H-013 Decommission roads causing environmental damage, or degrading desired landscape character or scenic integrity, or to manage visitor use and access. Administratively close roads as necessary.

4.H-014 This prescription includes a portion of the Kelly Ridge inventoried roadless area. Management actions will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of the entire inventoried roadless area.

Timber Management

4.H-015 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable, not appropriate, for timber production; however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect multiple-use values, and activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

4.H-016 On that portion of the Oconee National Forest south of Interstate 20, the requirements of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service January 2003 RCW Recovery Plan and its amendments must be complied with in each management prescription.

4.I NATURAL AREAS - FEW OPEN ROADS

The areas included in this prescription are:

Rocky Face	Overflow Creek
Rabun Bald	Bill Mountain
Rocky Mountain	

EMPHASIS

Provide recreation opportunities in isolated areas where users can obtain a degree of solitude and the environment can be maintained in a near-natural state. These areas are managed at an overall low management intensity.

DESIRED CONDITION

The landscape will appear to be primarily shaped by ecological processes, rather than management activities. The mix and types of forest communties will depend on the landtype associations in which this prescription is applied.

The landscape character is natural evolving or natural appearing with natural processes the agents of change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural change is assumed to be visually acceptable and no active management is directed at moderating visual contrasts. Evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is minimal and will normally be overlooked by most visitors. Human-caused change may be specifically mitigated to be made less obvious.

These areas will provide tracts of relatively remote recreation opportunities where human activities are subordinate to the landscape. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains at a low or very low level in comparison with the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. Visitors will see little evidence of humans or human activities other than remote recreation use, with the exception of the few open roads that provide access. Development of hiking trail systems will be emphasized. Outdoor skills and self-reliance will be important for visitors because of the limited access to these areas. Hiking, nature study, backpacking, orienteering, hunting, and fishing will be typical activities available in a relatively remote setting.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Monitoring of visitor satisfaction and expectations is on a special study or incidental basis. Search and rescue is not readily available. When needed, motorized operations are usually constrained by requirements for special case-by-case permissions except on open roads. Environmental effects of recovery operations are planned to be minimal and promptly rehabilitated.

Predominately late-successional forest communities will develop throughout the area, with canopy gaps and occasional large openings of early successional habitat created by natural disturbance. Old-growth forest communities will increase over the decades, except where significant natural disturbances occur.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained, but no expansion of openings or creation of new permanent openings of this type occurs. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, wildlife openings, and infrequent large contiguous areas up to several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forested conditions. Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences for threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species. Habitat for a broad mix of species will also be provided.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-4.I-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

4.I-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals

4.I-002 Using lease terms for environmental protection, Federal mineral leases would be allowed. Mineral material authorizations would be allowed.

Forest Health

4.I-003 Stands may be actively managed to reduce the risks and hazards of damage from native and nonnative invasive pests, while still meeting a high level of scenic integrity. Aggressive tactics should be particularly considered for areas within one tree height of trails.

4.I-004 Indigenous forest pests are kept within acceptable levels through Integrated Pest Management Techniques.

4.I-005 Forest pests not native to the area are minimized through judicious use of controls, silvicultural practices, and timely salvage of damaged trees. Actions need to be consistent with Forest Service policy, and Gypsy Moth EIS.

Recreation

4.I-006 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN2 and SPM.

Scenery

4.I.007 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	VH	H	M	M	M	M	M

Roads and Facilities

4.I-008 Up to 0.5 miles per entry of temporary-use road can be constructed for management purposes.

4.I-009 Temporary use roads will be closed and rehabilitated following use.

4.I-010 Close and rehabilitate existing roads that do not contribute to the objective of preserving the natural ecosystem and are not needed for administrative purposes.

4.I-011 If natural revegetation does not obliterate closed roads, use other measures—such as seeding or planting—if conditions warrant.

4.I-012 No new OHV/ATV travel routes will be constructed or designated.

4.I-013 Existing connecting trails to ATV and motorcycle routes would be allowed on a case-by-case basis. OHV systems are not an emphasis.

4.I-014 This prescription includes portions of the Sarah's Creek inventoried roadless area. Management actions will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of the entire inventoried roadless area.

Timber Management

4.I-015 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production; not appropriate; however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

Successional Stage Management

4.I-016 Creational of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

4.I-017 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

5.A ADMINISTRATIVE SITES

Administrative sites on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest include the following:

Black Mountain Tower
Brasstown Work Center
Brasstown Ranger District Office*
Chattahoochee National Fish Hatchery
Clayton Work Center
Cohutta Work Center
Georgia DNR Check Stations
Glassy Mountain Helibase
Grassy Mountain Tower
High Point Tower
Toccoa Work Center
Villanow Work Center
Yahoola Work Center

*Other Ranger District Offices are in leased commercial buildings not on National Forest System lands.

EMPHASIS

The emphasis is to provide administrative sites, work centers, and facilities that effectively and safely serve the public and accommodate the work force.

DESIRED CONDITION

The category includes areas such as work centers, lookout towers, and Forest Service owned offices. Sites are managed to support resource programs, and will be maintained to protect capital investment. Administrative sites are accessed by roads.

The character of the landscape could range from natural appearing to urban/cultural. The landscape character is predominately natural-appearing. Managed change is the primary cause of change in the visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is frequent. Management changes are designed to be moderate contrast or less and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management usually does not occur specifically to moderate visual contrasts of natural change.

Forest Service offices and visitor centers provide educational and interpretive opportunities such as exhibits and displays, books, videos, and brochures. Where feasible and appropriate, short hiking trails are provided in association with office and visitor centers.

Visitors are well informed through a variety of media, materials, and outlets to expect comfortable amenities. Navigation to areas is easy and includes signs on Federal, State, or county roads in addition to Forest Service roads. Supplies or services may be provided on-site through concessionaires, or are available close by. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are immediately available and receive unconstrained priority over resource concerns.

Facilities include a diverse mix of structural and non-structural types. Access is by all-weather, generally-paved roads that are passable and safe for passenger vehicles and school buses. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use year-round by the types of vehicles appropriate to public service and business operations. Total system road density may exceed the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

In these areas, modern, attractive, and well-maintained facilities are provided. Grounds may be landscaped with native plant materials. Interpretive services and activities are often provided and may be the major emphasis of individual facilities. Facilities are staffed as appropriate for the site. Sales outlets for Forest Service partners may be available. Security may be available on-site or on an on-call basis.

Protection will be provided for rare communities and species associates, along with the protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species.

Historic facilities will be protected through coordination with the Heritage Resources Program manager prior to any activity that may alter, or otherwise affect the historical integrity of the property.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

5.A-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

5.A-002 Using stipulations, such as no-surface occupancy or other lease terms to protect the area, Federal mineral leases may be allowed.

5.A-003 Mineral material authorizations with conditions to administer the area may be permitted.

Vegetation and Forest Health

5.A-004 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources.

Recreation

5.A-005 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1, Rural, Suburban, and Urban.

5.A-006 Existing four-wheel-drive roads will be allowed on a case-by-case basis.

5.A-007 Existing connecting trails to ATV and motorcycle routes allowed on a case-by-case basis. OHV systems are not an emphasis.

5.A-008 Do not develop new horse trails. Existing horse use will be phased out.

5.A-009 Do not develop new bike trails. Existing bike use will be phased out.

Scenery

5.A-010 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	M	M	M	M	M

Timber Management

5.A-011 These areas are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production, not forest land.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Protection

5.A-012 On that portion of the Oconee National Forest south of Interstate 20, the requirements of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service January 2003 RCW Recovery Plan and its amendments must be complied with in each management prescription.

5.B COMMUNICATION SITES

Communication sites on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests include the following:

Black Mountain
Brawley Mountain
Brasstown Bald
Cedar Cliff Knob
Currahee Mountain
Dug Gap Mountain
High House Mountain
Little Black Mountain
Mack White Gap
Rocky Top

EMPHASIS

These specific sites are managed to serve a public communication benefit. The sites accommodate ridge top radio, microwave, televsion, weather radar, cellular phone or other types of towers and their support facilities. These sites are of local, state, regional, and national significance to the communication and electronic network. These areas are managed to minimize adverse impacts on other areas.

DESIRED CONDITION

Existing special-use authorizations for communications and electronics continue within these specific sites. Each site is developed and utilized to its greatest potential to reduce the need to develop additional sites. All users' equipment would be compatible with other users' equipment and frequencies. New equipment should be as inconspicuous to the surrounding terrain as possible. Existing sites are expanded as needed rather than creating additional areas.

Scenery management techniques will be used to attempt to mitigate adverse impacts, however, the scenery integrity level ranges from Moderate to Low. Existing and proposed towers will be used to the extent feasible to accommodate as many users as possible within technical constraints of the towers and antennae.

Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density may exceed the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. Vehicle access to facilities is typically restricted. Safety fences are common to prevent visitors from climbing on towers or vandalizing buildings.

The landscape character is one of cultural nodes in predominately natural appearing settings. Managed change is the primary cause of change in the visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is frequent. Management changes are designed to be moderate contrast or less and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management usually does not occur specifically to moderate visual contrasts of natural change.

Recreation is not emphasized or encouraged at these sites.

STANDARDS

Minerals and Geology

5.B-001 Using stipulations, such as no-surface occupancy or other lease terms to protect the area, Federal mineral leases may be allowed.

5.B-002 Mineral material authorizations with conditions to administer the area may be permitted.

Vegetation and Forest Health

5.B-003 Herbicides may be used in these areas following the requirements found in the Vegetation Management EIS as amended.

5.B-004 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was established, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources

Recreation

5.B-005 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1 and Rural.

Scenery

5.B-006 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	M	M	L	L	L	L	L

Timber Management

5.B-007 These sites are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production, not forest land.

5.D MILITARY-USE AREAS (CAMP MERRILL)

EMPHASIS

This area consists of the U.S Army's buildings, support and training facilities located within the Camp Frank Merrill compound. The unit served is the US Army 5th Ranger Battalion. The area is the site of the mountain phase of Ranger training. This area is to be managed in accordance with the directions established in the Supplemental Agreement between the Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service; and the Master Agreement between the Department of Defense and Department of Agriculture.

DESIRED CONDITION

Access into the area and use by forest visitors is limited and at the discretion of Camp Merrill's command. Public safety, the security of the facility, and its efficient operation are primary concerns. (Refer also to Forestwide direction, Special Uses.)

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

5.D-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Vegetation and Forest Health

5.D-002 The forest health strategy is to prevent the occurrence of pest problems by managing host type conditions at low hazard. Aggressive suppression of pests, both nonnative and native, with all available tools is normal practice including species conversions to match species to sites and genetic selections for disease resistance. Salvage is rapid and complete; and it emphasizes marketing timber before its value decreases.

Recreation

5.D-003 OHV trails are not permitted.

5.D-004 Do not develop new horse trails. Existing horse use will be phased out.

5.D-005 Do not develop new bike trails. Existing bike use will be phased out.

Scenery

5.D-006 The landscape character and SIO (Moderate to Low) are dependent on the terms of the MOU with the Department of Defense.

Timber Management

5.D-007 These areas are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production, not forest land.

6.B AREAS MANAGED TO RESTORE/MAINTAIN OLD GROWTH CHARACTERISTICS

EMPHASIS

This prescription, along with other prescriptions that result in the same conditions, provides an overall network of large (2,500+ acres), medium (100 to 2,499 acres), and small (less than 100 acres) old growth blocks. The emphasis is first restoration then maintenance of old-growth forests for their associated wildlife, botanical, recreational, scientific, educational, cultural, and spiritual values. Within this prescription, forest management activities are allowed for those associated values within the constrain of restoring or maintaining old-growth conditions.

DESIRED CONDITION

There is much variation in old-growth descriptions for each forest community type but they share some common characteristics. The structure of the woody vegetation community is complex at a small scale of tens to thousands of acres and is characterized by:

- large diameter trees for the species and site;
- large variation in tree diameter;
- large variation in tree density;
- accumulations of large-sized dead standing and fallen trees in amounts that are high in comparison to earlier growth stages within the same old growth community type;
- decadence in the form of broken or deformed tops or boles, root decay, and trunk decay;
- multiple canopy layers;
- canopy gaps; and
- understory patchiness.

In addition, non-native species are absent or very infrequent. If they occur, they are not aggressively spreading or significantly altering community species composition when compared with comparable communities within the ecological section without such species. Canopy removal occurs by natural events on about 2 to 3 percent of area per decade. Forest succession as a result of natural changes, where this change is acceptable, is gradually moving composition toward more shade tolerant species such as white pine, hemlock, beech, rhododendron, mountain laurel, red maple, sourwood, and blackgum except where restoration activities have taken place. In restored areas, the existing old growth community is replacing itself naturally following disturbance, predictably maintaining the community on the landscape in perpetuity.

Human-caused change to the vegetation structure may be obvious, but does not conflict at the scale of the entire block with the eight listed old growth vegetative characteristics. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, pre-existing wildlife openings, tree removal gaps, and infrequent large contiguous areas up to several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

6.B AREAS MANAGED TO RESTORE/MAINTAIN OLD GROWTH CHARACTERISTICS

Visitors will see variation of old growth characteristics that will be natural appearing and provide a diversity of tree sizes, tree density, and species as well as standing and down dead trees. Visitors will occasionally see other people especially near the few open roads or motorized trails within these areas. Outdoor skills and self-reliance will be important for visitors in the more remote areas. No visitor information is provided to create any specific expectation of amenities unless managed interpretive efforts are conducted on selected blocks. Signs are typically absent except in interpretive areas. Visitors are typically expected to be rather skilled in the outdoors, self-reliant and well prepared. Visitor expectations and satisfaction are monitored. Recreation uses are mostly dispersed, such as hunting or hiking. Extraction activities such as collections of increment cores, tree disks, soil samples, or individual specimens are allowed for scientific or educational purposes, especially for the study of old growth values in comparison to earlier life stages.

Facilities are typically roads or hiking trails that existed prior to designation as an old growth block. Structures are rare. Existing facilities are maintained in serviceable condition with the emphasis on resource protection but not improved beyond their original design. Total road density; that is, both open and closed, is below the average for the ecological section for each contiguous allocation block when expressed on an equal area basis. New facility development is mitigated to maintain old growth vegetative characteristics for the affected old growth community type(s) within each allocated block. Access may be restricted to foot travel, and Forest Service roads may be open only seasonally. Roads may require high-clearance vehicles.

The landscape character is natural-appearing. Natural processes, including fire, are the primary agents of change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural-appearing managed change that affects canopy continuity or vegetation structure occurs but affects a limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low to moderate contrast with comparable undisturbed and high-quality existing old growth conditions of the same old growth community within the ecological section, where available, and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management rarely occurs to moderate visual contrasts of natural change.

Pre-existing old fields and openings for wildlife are normally maintained, but allowed to succeed to forest. In some cases existing openings may be obliterated through tree planting and elimination of nonnative species. New permanent wildlife openings are not created.

There is no objective for early successional wildlife habitat. Wildlife habitats are characterized by nearly unbroken tree canopy and old forest. There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring late-successional and old growth forested conditions. Large downed woody material, standing snags, and tree cavities are common. Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species. Habitat for a mix of species associated with old growth characteristics will also be provided.

Fisheries management activities are allowed to restore, enhance, and manage, aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known

populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

6.B-001 No new utility corridors or communication sites will be authorized within these areas. Other special uses may be authorized provided they are not in conflict with old growth characteristics, or can be mitigated to not be in conflict.

Minerals and Geology

6.B-002 Using stipulations such as no-surface occupancy and controlled surface use to protect the characteristics of the area, Federal mineral leases may be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

6.B-003 Native pests are generally conducive to providing the desired conditions of this management prescription, and will be controlled only when the predicted mortality of host species would make the affected old growth community type within any allocated block incapable of meeting old growth criteria for any old growth type for twenty years or more and at least one of the following conditions are met:

(1) host type is 30 percent or more of the area of an individual old growth allocation block;
(2) outbreak status exists at the ecological subsection scale
(3) hazard rating for host species within the block is high;
(4) the threatened old-growth type within the block is less than 5 percent of total National Forest forestland at ecological section scale; or
(5) a sensitive habitat type adjacent to an old growth area is threatened by inaction.

6.B-004 Eradication may be used for newly discovered nonnative invasive pests. Control may be used for established nonnative invasive pests.

6.B-005 Human-caused change to the vegetation structure may be obvious, but may not conflict at the scale of the affected old growth community type or types within each allocated block with the eight old growth vegetative characteristics to the extent that after the activity; (a) any one of them is eliminated, or (b) defining criteria for existing old growth could have been met before but can no longer be met, or (c) defining criteria for existing old growth could have been met before but can no longer be met within twenty years into the future.

Recreation

6.B-006 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed Roaded Natural ROS settings.

6.B-007 Designated OHV connector trails, but not trail systems, may be considered. Pre-existing trails may be retained.

Scenery

6.B-008 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	M	M	M	L	L

Facilities, Roads, and Access

6.B-009 Pre-existing system roads may be retained but new system roads may not be constructed.

6.B-010 Up to one-half mile of temporary-use road per entry can be constructed for management purposes within any single contiguous block of this management prescription..

6.B-011 Temporary use roads will be closed and rehabilitated following use.

6.B-012 Close and rehabilitate existing roads that are determined to be in excess of that needed to meet other plan goals, objectives, and standards.

6.B-013 Pre-existing wildlife openings may be retained but new openings may not be created.

6.B-014 This prescription includes portions of the Bogg's Creek inventoried roadless area. Management actions will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of the entire inventoried roadless area.

Timber Management

6.B-015 Commercial sale of wood products is permissible but must be designed to restore forest structure, composition, and age consistent with meeting the old growth criteria of the selected old growth community type as soon as practicable.

6.B-016 Pattern harvest amount and distribution after natural community dynamics. Opening size for group selection is limited to a maximum of one acre.

6.B-017 Timber may be salvaged after a catastrophe as needed for safety or legal reasons and to return pre-existing facilities to use.

6.B-018 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production – not appropriate; however, activities that meet the Plan goals and objectives for old growth are permitted.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Protection

6.B-019 On that portion of the Oconee National Forest south of Interstate 20, the requirements of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service January 2003 RCW Recovery Plan and its amendments must be complied with in each management prescription.

6.D CORE AREAS OF OLD GROWTH SURROUNDED BY AREAS WITH EXTENDED FOREST ROTATIONS

EMPHASIS

This prescription, along with other prescriptions that result in the same conditions, provides part of an overall network of large (2,500+ acres) and medium (100 to 2,499 acres) old growth blocks. Within allocations to this prescription is a core area managed the same as MRx 6.B. The emphasis is on restoration of old growth conditions in the core area. Outside it, the emphasis is maintenance to supply a flow of old-growth replacement stands over time using an even-aged silvicultural systems with an earliest regeneration age beyond the minimum old growth age of each component old growth community type..

Desired Condition

The area contains a representation of the old growth community types associated with a moderate to high intensity disturbance regime or ones in which management is designed to accelerate the development of old-growth vegetative conditions. The most common old-growth forest community types in this area include:

- Xeric pine and pine-oak forest and woodland
- Dry and dry-mesic oak-pine forest
- Upland longleaf pine forest, woodland, and savanna
- Dry and xeric oak forest, woodland, and savanna

Each contiguous allocation block is characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately thirty acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas up to several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

The structure of the woody vegetation community is typically complex at the scale of individual areas of each included old growth community type but may be relatively simple for woodland communities and areas recently treated. Structure within each component old growth community type is usually characterized by:

- large diameter trees for the species and site;
- large variation in tree diameter;
- large variation in tree density;
- accumulations of large-sized dead standing and fallen trees in amounts that are high in comparison to earlier growth stages within the same old growth community type;
- decadence in the form of broken or deformed tops or boles, root decay, and trunk decay;
- multiple canopy layers;
- canopy gaps; and
- understory patchiness.

6.D
CORE AREAS OF OLD GROWTH SURROUNDED BY AREAS WITH EXTENDED FOREST ROTATIONS

In addition, non-native species are very infrequent if they occur at all. Human-caused change can be obvious outside the core and can temporarily conflict with maintaining old growth vegetative conditions. Outside the core area, activities may include even-aged timber harvest, intermediate thinning, prescribed burning, and vegetation control. Forest health treatments will focus on reducing the risk of losing old-growth characteristics in the area to forest insects or disease. Management emphasis will also be placed on improving conditions where past human activities (i.e., improperly constructed roads, trails, and dispersed sites) are impacting water quality or riparian ecosystem functions.

The landscape character is a mixture of natural-appearing outside the core and natural-evolving within it. Natural processes, including fire, are the primary agents of strong change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture within the core. Outside the core, natural-appearing managed change occurs but affects a limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes in the core are low contrast and low to moderate outside and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management usually does not occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change.

Existing old fields and herbaceous openings for wildlife may be present and maintained, but no expansion of openings or creation of new permanent openings of this type occurs. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

No visitor information is provided to create any specific expectation of amenities except as these areas are used for interpretation or conservation education. Signs are also very limited. Visitors are expected to be rather skilled in the outdoors, self-reliant and well prepared. Visitor expectations and satisfaction are monitored.

Facilities are typically roads and trails, and structures are rare. Existing facilities are maintained in serviceable condition with the emphasis on resource protection. They are not improved beyond their original design. In these areas, no new structural facilities are provided.

Access may be restricted to foot travel, and roads may be open only seasonally. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains at a low level in comparison with the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

Management is constrained to remain compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. The recreation use emphasis is on dispersed activities such as hunting, fishing, or hiking but localized and limited development facilitates those uses.

The area will provide habitat conditions suitable for a mix of game and non-game species. For fire-dependent pine forest habitats, habitat associates emphasized within this allocation include southern yellow pine associates, pine savanna and/or woodland associates, and mixed xeric forest associates. The desired terrestrial conditions will provide high-quality watershed conditions, resulting in secure aquatic ecosystems and habitats on lands where this prescription is applied.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on a sample basis to characterize larger scale conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects and are actively managed to restore native species and improve aquatic habitat conditions. Fisheries management activities are allowed to restore, enhance, and manage aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia

Department of Natural Resources. In-stream activities such as placing cover logs are usually associated with high-demand fisheries or recreation use.

National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest. Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of terrestrial PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-6.D-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

6.D-001 No new utility corridors or communication sites will be authorized within these areas. Other special uses may be authorized provided they are not in conflict with old growth characteristics or can be mitigated to not be in conflict.

6.D-002 Pre-existing special uses that are in conflict with old growth characteristics will be modified at the time of renewal to eliminate or reduce the conflict. If this is not possible, consider termination of the special use.

Minerals and Geology

6.D-003 Using stipulations such as no-surface occupancy and controlled surface use or regular lease terms to protect the characteristics of the area, Federal mineral leases may be allowed.

6.D-004 Mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect the old growth characteristics of each contiguous allocation block may be permitted.

Forest Health

6.D-005 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled outside the core area in the same manner and to the same extent as in MRx 9.H. Within the core area, constraints of MRx 6.B apply.

6.D-006 Preventive activities such as thinning and prescribed burning may be used outside of the core areas to reduce the hazard of insect and disease outbreaks, if these are threats to old-growth characteristics.

6.D-007 Eradication may be considered for newly discovered nonnative invasive pests. Control may be used for established nonnative invasive pests. Actions need to be consistent with Forest Service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and SPB EIS.

Recreation

6.D-008 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN2 and SPM.

6.D-009 Designated OHV connector trails, but not trail systems, may be considered. Pre-existing trails may be retained.

Scenery

6.D-010 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	M	M	M	L	L

Facilities, Roads, and Access

6.D-011 Maintain total system road density; that is, both open and closed, below the average for the ecological section for each contiguous allocation block when compared on an equal area basis.

6.D-012 Allow motorized access if it specifically contributes to the management objectives or protection of the area

6.D-013 OHV access points (trailheads) or connecting trails may be considered provided OHV screening criteria have been met or can be with special project mitigation. OHV trail systems may not be considered within this prescription. Pre-existing OHV trails may remain provided they meet OHV screening criteria.

6.D-014 Pre-existing wildlife openings may be retained but new openings are not created.

Timber Management

6.D-015 Core areas of each allocation block are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production, not appropriate; however, activities that meet the Plan goals and objectives for old growth are permitted. Lands outside the core area are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Successional Stage Management

6.D-016 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than 2 acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

6.D-017 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

7.A SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR

7.A SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR

USDA Forest Service Chief, Dale Robertson, initiated the development of a National Forest Scenic Byway system in 1987; designating its first ten byways from field employee nominations in 1988. The 1991 Federal highway bill created the process for establishing a National Scenic Byways system for our national road system. On May 11, 1995, the National Scenic Byways Program announced its official rule, which established criteria for establishing a designation and a grants program in the Federal Register. Eligibility for grant funding was further dependent on designation as State Scenic Byways or having been accepted as DOT National Scenic Byways, or All American Roads

The scenic byway corridors on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests are the Russell-Brasstown National Scenic Byway (41 miles) and the Forest Service Ridge and Valley Scenic Byway (51 miles).

> *"Located within the Chattahoochee National Forest in northeast Georgia, the Russell-Brasstown National Scenic Byway is a 41-mile loop revealing some of the most dramatic scenery in the state. The Russell-Brasstown route was awarded National Scenic Byway Designation on June 15, 2000. Included on this route is Brasstown Bald, Georgia's highest mountain.Located near the byway is the Bavarian-themed town of Helen. Following State Highways 348, 180, and 17/75, the loop encircles Wildlife Management Areas, the headwaters of the Chattahoochee River, and a section of the Appalachian Trail. Nearby Vogel and Unicoi State Parks offer numerous recreational opportunities in addition to the camping, fishing and hiking facilities found along the Byway.*
>
> *As the name implies, the Ridge and Valley Scenic Byway provides a chance to experience the varied terrain of northwest Georgia. Mountain overlooks and fertile farmlands can be found along the 51-mile Byway as it travels U.S. 27, State Highways 156 and 136, and rural county roads. Outdoor activities ranging from hiking, camping, picnicking, fishing, and hunting can be enjoyed at the Keown Falls Scenic Area, the Pocket, and John's Mountain Overlook and Wildlife Management Area. The surrounding countryside holds the histories of the native Cherokee Indian Nation, Civil War battles, and early settlers whose 1800's farmhouses still stand."* (Source: Georgia Department of Transportation website: *www.dot.state.ga.us/dot/planprog/planning/projects/scenic_byways/index.shtml*)

EMPHASIS

A scenic byway corridor is managed to provide visitors enjoyment of outstanding scenery of natural and cultural landscapes along a well-maintained road. The area may also contain recreational and interpretive trails. The byway corridor will be defined by the area visible during the leaf-off season for up to one-half mile from either side of the road, unless other criteria were established in the specific scenic byway corridor management plan. Management will be focused on protecting and showcasing the unique and scenic natural and cultural resources, which were the basis for the corridor being designated a scenic byway.

DESIRED CONDITION

The prescription area will be easily accessed, and designed primarily for scenic driving. Recreation experience is provided in a natural appearing or pastoral landscape; natural processes and management activity influence vegetation.

Visitors expect a roadway with outstanding scenic views and natural beauty. Facilities consist primarily of the roadway, overlook areas, interpretative signs, and perhaps, information kiosks or bulletin boards. The Byway itself is suitable year-round for passenger cars. Other roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density may exceed the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. Signs identify trails or recreation areas within, or near, the scenic byway. Interpretive services including trails, signs, viewing areas, self-guided programs, and buildings are provided to enhance the understanding of, and appreciation for, the natural environment, cultural resources, and the byway's special features. All these improvements are designed to blend in with surroundings.

Views along the byway will be natural appearing and include a variety of landscape characters, ranging from natural appearing to pastoral and historic/cultural. A continuous overstory canopy of large hardwoods and pines, as well as understory and ground cover vegetation, provide colorful accents and interesting textures for each season. Visitors enjoy viewing wildlife in the occasional openings or meadows scattered throughout the forest. Water, geographic features, or cultural landscapes provide scenic diversions to the predominately forested landscape. Road corridor improvements and interpretive facilities will be evident changes to the natural environment, but these human-made alterations will fit well with the character of the surrounding landscape.

Natural-appearing managed change will occur, but will affect a limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change.

In the corridor, recreation consists primarily of driving for pleasure and enjoying the views. The scenic byway corridor may also provide access to additional recreational areas or trails coincidentally located within the viewing distance that defines the corridor. Trails for horse, bike, and OHV quickly leave the area, and do not parallel the byway. The density of open roads and/or motorized vehicle trails remains near the average road and trail density of Forest Service roads within the ecological section throughout the planning period.

Natural processes and management activities will influence vegetation. The mix and types of forest communties depend on the landtype associations in which this prescription is applied. These areas are characterized by a predominance of mid- and late-successional forests, but up to 4 percent of forested land may be in early-successional forest conditions.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present, maintained, and expanded and new openings may be created. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forested conditions. Management/protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species. Habitat for a broad mix of species is also provided.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

OBJECTIVES

OBJ-7.A-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

OBJ-7.A-02 Complete scenic byway corridor management plans within 10 years of plan implementation.

OBJ-7.A-03 Co-operate with Georgia Department of Transportation and county highway departments in construction of bike lanes on Scenic Byways as opportunity offers.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

7.A-001 In addition to the Forestwide Standards, a project level landscape management plan with screening, feathering, and other vegetation management techniques will be required to mitigate the visual and other impacts from new, upgraded or reauthorized utility corridors or communication sites. Other special uses are authorized if consistent and compatible with the goals and objectives of this area.

Minerals and Geology

7.A-002 Using stipulations such as no-surface occupancy and controlled surface use to protect the characteristics of the area, federal mineral leases would be allowed.

7.A-003 Mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect the characteristics of the area would be permitted.

Vegetation and Forest Health

7.A-004 Using integrated pest management techniques that will continue to meet scenic integrity objectives, stands may be actively managed to reduce the risks and hazards of damage from native and nonnative invasive pests.

7.A-005 Eradication may be used for newly discovered nonnative invasive pests.

7.A-006 Fell hazardous trees in areas used by people (e.g., roads and picnic sites).

7.A-007 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was designated, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources provided that pest management activities shall be as specific as possible against target organisms and induce minimal impact to other components of the ecosystem.

Fire Management

7.A-008 In the immediate foreground of the seen area from the designated byway, use the minimum amount of ground, vegetation, or stream disturbance that is effective to achieve fire management objectives.

Recreation

7.A-009 Projects requiring an Environmental Assessment (EA) will not be implemented until the Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan is completed. The Corridor Management Plan will guide the development of new projects.

7.A-010 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1 or Rural.

7.A-011 Only access points (trailheads) or connecting OHV travel routes would be allowed on a case-by-case basis; these trails quickly leave the Byway corridor.

7.A-012 Trails designated for horse or bike use on National Forest do not parallel the Byway for long distances.

Scenery

7.A-013 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

7.A-014 Short-term SIOs for rehabilitation and enhancement may be used until scenic integrity objectives are achieved.

Facilities, Roads, and Access

7.A-015 Design and construct access roads to meet the scenic integrity of High. Premit new access roads, provided they quickly enter and leave the seen area, and do not parallel the Byway..

Timber Management

7.A-016 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Successional Stage Management

7.A-017 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

7.B SCENIC CORRIDORS AND SENSITIVE VIEWSHEDS

Scenic Corridors and Sensitive Viewshed areas include the foreground of National and State Highways, also major Forest Service roads. Forest Service roads typically are through roads, access developed recreation sites or nationally-designated areas, and have realtively high traffic volumes. The following road segments (and potentially others) are Included in this prescription:

Georgia Highway 42 across Buzzard Roost
Georgia Highway 52 near Fort Mountain State Park
FS Rd 630 from Crandell to Lake Conasauga to Sumac
FS Rd 64 from Three Forks to Mule Top
FS Rd 793 at Double Knob
FS Rds 42 and 66 at Buzzard Roost
FS Rd 58 at Noontootla Creek
US Highway 19/129 at Sosbee Cove (beyond Vogel State Park)
US Highway 27 Bypass intersection with Georgia Highway 1
Georgia Highway 136 at Maddox Gap

EMPHASIS

The emphasis is on maintenance, or restoration and design, to provide high-quality scenery in sensitive recreational and travelway settings. Examples include areas adjacent to communities; areas around lakes, rivers, and streams; and areas viewed from state-designated byways, and major travel ways.

DESIRED CONDITION

The landscape is predominantly natural appearing, and includes a variety of landscape characters, ranging from natural appearing to pastoral and historic/cultural. Understory vegetation includes a variety of native deciduous and evergreen flowering trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. The mix and types of forest communties will depend on the landtype associations in which this prescription is applied.

Visitors will view high-quality scenery in a setting conducive to a variety of recreational experiences. Human modifications will be subordinate to the characteristic landscape. Landscape restoration and rehabilitation to meet high-quality scenic conditions will be a high priority. Coordination with nearby communities will help provide complementary management of adjoining lands. Some areas would offer views into park-like stands, highlighting larger diameter trees. Scenic water features may also be present. The sensitive view shed may also be a natural appearing open area, bald, or pastoral landscape.

The primary landscape character is natural-appearing with natural processes the dominant agents of strong change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural-appearing managed change occurs but affects a very limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change, but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is subordinate to scenic quality.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present, maintained, and expanded. New openings may also be created. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Non-motorized and motorized recreation may occur in this prescription area as long as it does not negatively impact the scenic value of the area as viewed from sensitive travel ways, use areas, and adjacent communities. Hiking, mountain biking, and horse trails are present throughout the prescription area. OHV trails may be present at low density as a link to an existing trail system from a trailhead, but new trails are not constructed. OHV connector trails do not parallel the road, trail or use area that was the reason for the management prescription allocation.

Sights and sounds of other visitors and motorized vehicles may be present. Total system road density veries widely but may exceed the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. The opportunity to encounter other visitors is high along roadways, at parking areas, at pullouts, and at overlooks, but may be moderate to low on trails away from congregated-use areas. At points of highly developed recreational use, visitors take on low risk and are not challenged to rely on their own physical abilities and outdoor skills. In the more remote areas, visitors may take on some risk and be challenged to rely on their own personal physical abilities and primitive recreational skills. Visitors may engage in photography, wildlife viewing, hunting and fishing and activities or facilities to enhance these opportunities may occur. Facilities are designed to fit the character of the specific sites where they are located. Trails may be highly developed, including hardened trails for a high level of accessibility for persons with all levels of abilities. Facilities may include roads, pullouts, overlooks, parking areas, trailheads, bulletin boards, interpretive kiosks, rail fences, signs, restrooms, and picnic sites.

Management is constrained to remain compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. Recreation uses are both dispersed and developed, but dispersed uses typically are associated with a developed site. Developed sites have posted Safety Zones in which hunting is prohibited. Current examples include Lake Russell, the Upper Chattahoochee River, and the Ridge and Valley Scenic Byway. Visitor expectations and satisfaction are monitored.

Natural processes and humans influence vegetation. The mix and types of forest communties will depend on the landtype associations in which this prescription is applied. Areas may show evidence of forest resource management activities but are visually subordinate to the characteristic landscape. These lands may have a combination of prescribed fire, low-intensity timber harvesting, and wildlife habitat improvements resulting in a forest of deciduous and mixed hardwood-pine forest community types primarily in mid- and late-successional conditions. Communities are structurally diverse, with occasional small gaps occurring from natural events and vegetation manipulation by humans. Even-aged and uneven-aged forest communities will develop in the view shed along with medium and small patches of old-growth forest communities.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forested conditions. Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species. Habitat for a broad mix of species will also be provided.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-7.B-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

7.B-001 In addition to the forestwide standards, a project level landscape management plan with screening, feathering, and other vegetation management techniques will be required to mitigate the visual and other impacts from new, upgraded, or reauthorized utility corridors or communication sites. Other special uses are authorized if consistent and compatible with the goals and objectives of this area.

Minerals and Geology

7.B-002 Using stipulations such as no-surface occupancy and controlled surface use to protect the characteristics of the area, Federal mineral leases would be allowed.

7.B003 Mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect the characteristics of the area would be considered.

Vegetation and Forest Health

7.B-004 Using integrated pest management techniques that will continue to meet scenic integrity objectives, stands may be actively managed to reduce the risks and hazards of damage from native and nonnative invasive pests.

7.B-005 Eradication may be used for newly discovered nonnative invasive pests. Established populations may be controlled to prevent spread.

7.B-006 Fell hazard trees in areas used by people (e.g., roads and picnic sites).

7.B-007 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was allocated, to reduce hazards to visitors, for safety or legal reasons, or to protect adjacent resources provided that pest management activities shall be specific to the target organisms and impacts to other components of the ecosystem are mitigated.

Recreation

7.B-008 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1, RN2, SPM.

7.B-009 OHV trails: Only access points (trailheads) or connecting trails allowed on a case-by-case basis.

Scenery

7.B-010 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	M	M	M	M	M

Timber Management

7.B-011 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Succession Stage Management

7.B-012 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

7.B-013 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

7.E.1 DISPERSED RECREATION AREAS

EMPHASIS

These areas receive moderate to high recreation use and are managed to provide the public with a variety of recreation opportunities in a setting that provides quality scenery, numerous trails and limited facilities. The management emphasis is to improve the settings for non-formal outdoor recreation in a manner that protects and restores the health, diversity, and productivity of the watersheds .

DESIRED CONDITION

This area will be managed and monitored to absorb moderate to high levels of use with minimal improvements while protecting soil, vegetation, and water resource conditions.

A visually-appealing landscape is achieved by providing vista openings, featuring special attractions like rock outcroppings and waterfalls, and by providing park like stands and a diversity of vegetation species and age classes. The predominant landscape is natural appearing with variations of structurally diverse mid- to late- successional communities. Small and medium patches of old-growth forest communities, as well as small canopy gaps would develop over time throughout the area. Up to 4 percent of forested land may be in early-successional forest conditions created both naturally and through management. Approximately 85 percent of the forest cover in these areas would be mid- to late- successional communities with potential old growth forests. The scenic integrity objectives would be Moderate to High. Where possible, management changes are designed to be in low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present, maintained, and expanded. New openings may also occur. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Visitors will be able to choose from a wide variety of high-quality, well-maintained, dispersed recreation opportunities such as camping, hiking, horseback riding, mountain bike riding, rock climbing, nature studying, hunting, fishing, and canoeing. Loop and interconnected trail systems will be available for use. Visitors will frequently see other people in some parts of this area. Sights and sounds of human activities will be evident in many locations. Trails will be maintained, improved, or expanded to meet local demands, provided the local ecosystem is not negatively affected. Outdoor skills are of moderate importance for visitors, except where knowledge of specialized activities such as horseback riding, mountain biking, or rock climbing, is critical.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Signs are few, but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Monitoring of visitor satisfaction and expectations will be done periodically to assess how well these areas are meeting the Forest Plan Goals and Objectives. Search and rescue is readily available.

All roads, facilities, and signing are designed to blend in with surroundings. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road

density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. Existing open public roads are maintained at or above current levels to provide for public access and parking safety. Capacity of facilities is typically low, and they are rustic in character. Construction of new facilities is limited and usually done in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity.

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forest conditions. Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences for threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species. Habitat for a broad mix of species will also be provided.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest,including huntable or fishable populations of terrestrial and aquatic demand species.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-7.E.1-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forest acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

7.E.1-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

7.E.1-002 Using lease terms for environmental protection, Federal mineral leases and mineral material authorizations would be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

7.E.1-003 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was allocated; to reduce hazards to visitors; for safety or legal reasons; to protect adjacent resources; or to protect ecosystem composition, structure, and function.

Recreation

7.E.1-004 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1, RN2, SPM, and SPNM.

7.E.1-005 OHV trail systems are permissible provided screening criteria have been met.

Scenery

7.E.1-006 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	M	M	M	M	M

Facilities, Roads, and Access

7.E.1-007 This prescription includes portions of the Pink Knob, and Rocky Mountaiin inventoried roadless areas. Management actions in any one of them will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of each entire inventoried roadless area.

Timber Management

7.E.1-008 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production; not appropriate;however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

Successional Stage Management

7.E.1-009 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Protection

7.E.1-010 On that portion of the Oconee National Forest south of Interstate 20, the requirements of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service January 2003 RCW Recovery Plan and its amendments must be complied with in each management prescription.

7.E.2 DISPERSED RECREATION AREAS WITH VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

EMPHASIS

These areas receive moderate to high recreation use and are managed to improve the settings for non-formal outdoor recreation in a manner that protects and restores the health, diversity, and productivity of the watersheds where the areas are located. These areas will be suitable for timber production in order to maintain the long-term goals of a diverse and vigorous forest for scenery, recreation, and wildlife. Forest management operations focus on what is retained in the stand, not on wood fiber production. Forest management practices are modified to recognize the recreational and aesthetic values of these areas.

DESIRED CONDITION

These areas will be characterized by easy access and will be capable of sustaining a relatively high number of visitors in a manner that protects the surrounding water, soil, vegetation, and wildlife.

Visitors to these natural appearing settings will be able to choose from a variety of well maintained, nature-based recreation opportunities. A visually appealing landscape is emphasized by providing vista openings, featuring special attractions like rock outcroppings and waterfalls, and by providing park like stands and a diversity of vegetation species and age classes. The predominant landscape character would be variations of structurally diverse mid- to late- successional communities with occasional pastoral and historic/cultural enclaves and small to medium patches of old-growth forest communities.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained. Expansion of existing openings and/or creation of new openings may occur. Non-invasive nonnatives are sometimes used when establishing food plants for wildlife, but native species are used where feasible and cost effective. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Recreation opportunities in this area include, but are not limited to, driving for pleasure, day hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, camping, backpacking, hunting, fishing, off-highway vehicle driving, rock climbing, nature study, viewing and photographing scenery, and river running. Trails through this area are well marked and may include features for visitors with special access needs, loop systems, and/or interpretive programs.

The sights and sounds of other visitors and motorized vehicles may be present. The opportunity to encounter other visitors is high along roadways, at parking areas, pullouts, and overlooks, but may be moderate to low on trails away from congregated use areas. In remote areas, visitors may take on some risk and be challenged to rely on their own personal physical abilities and primitive recreational skills such as bouldering, climbing, stream fording, and orienteering. The recreational opportunity spectrum will range from RN 1, RN 2 to rural.

Non-motorized and motorized trails and travel routes will be maintained, improved, or expanded to meet local demands provided watershed and ecosystem health are not

negatively affected. Limitations of use will occur if any dispersed activity results in, or is expected to result in, negative affects to watershed or ecosystem health.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Monitoring of visitor satisfaction and expectations will occur periodically to assess whether Forest Plan Goals and Objectives are being met. Search and rescue is readily available.

Facilities within these areas may include portable or permanent toilets, trash receptacles, fire grills, signs, and vehicle barriers, but are generally rare and are only provided for health and sanitation or to protect the area from resource damage. Structures are uncommon. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. T otal system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. In these areas existing facilities are maintained above a resource protection level, but without a strong emphasis on visitor expectations. Capacity of facilities is typically low and they are rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities.

Management is designed to meet the growing demands for dispersed activities such as pleasure driving, day hiking, hunting, fishing, mountain biking, and horseback riding and OHV trails or routes. Management is constrained to remain compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class.

Forest management activities maintain the natural characteristics that make the area popular. They are designed to:

- enhance both game and nongame wildlife habitat, including aquatics, for viewing, photographing, fishing, and hunting;
- feature flowering trees, hard and soft mast bearing trees, character trees, and shrub species;
- enhance fall color species;
- create a pleasing mosaic of tree species of various densities and stem sizes;
- minimize impacts from insect or disease outbreaks; or
- rehabilitate areas damaged by insects or disease.

Management activities will normally be visually subordinate to the surrounding landscape. In the foreground of sensitive roads and trails, these activities will rarely be evident to the casual observer.

Approximately 85% of these areas will be characterized by a predominance of mid- and late-successional forests during this plan cycle, but up to 10 percent per decade of forested land may be in early-successional forest conditions. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 10 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres, but the severity of effect will be moderated from low intensity management. The range of canopy breaks includes frequent small gaps created by individual tree mortality, occasional insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately thirty acres, and rare large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

7.E.2 DISPERSED RECREATION Areas WITH VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

These areas will be managed to provide a diversity of wildlife habitats to enhance the dispersed recreation experience, including bird watching, fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing. Biological communities are maintained or improved to provide wildlife species diversity and viability as well as an attractive setting for visitors. Habitat conditions would be beneficial to forest interior, mid- to late-successional associates, bottomland forest associates, and basic and mixed mesic associates. (For forest interior, mid- to late-successional associates, this prescription applies only to National Forests located in the Blue Ridge Mountain ecological section, because that section is greater than 80 percent forested.) High quality watershed conditions are provided, resulting in secure aquatic ecosystems/habitats on Forest lands.

These areas will be characterized by an intermediate mix of forest successional stages. Mid- and late-successional forests will be common, but 4 to 10 percent of forested land will be in early-successional forest conditions. Early-successional forest patches vary in size, but many are larger than 20 acres to provide optimal conditions for dependent species. Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest, and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-7.E.2-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in mid- to late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 20 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and 4 to 10 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

7.E.2-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

7.E.2-002 Using lease terms for environmental protection, Federal mineral leases and mineral material authorizations would be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

7.E.2-003 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to protect the values for which the area was allocated; to reduce hazards to visitors; for safety or legal reasons; to protect adjacent resources; or to protect ecosystem composition, structure, and function.

Recreation

7.E.2-004 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1 and RN2

7.E.2-005 OHV use is allowed if screening criteria are met.

Scenery

7.E.2-006 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	M	L	L	L	L

Facilities, Roads, and Access

7.E.2-007 This prescription includes portions of the Pink Knob and Sarah's Creek inventoried roadless areas. Management actions in any one of them will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of each entire inventoried roadless area.

Timber Management

7.E.2-008 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

For forest interior, mid- to late-successional associates - this prescription applies only to NFs located in the Blue Ridge Mtn. Section, because that ecological section is greater than 80 percent forested.

Successional Stage Management

7.E.2-009 Creation of early-successional habitat is limited to 10 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

8.A.1 MIX OF SUCCESSIONAL FOREST HABITATS

EMPHASIS

In these areas, the emphasis will be to provide habitats associated with mid- to late-successional forest habitats. Management activities are designed to: (1) retain a forested canopy across at least 50 percent of the prescription area, (2) maintain or enhance hard and soft mast production, (3) increase vegetative diversity (structural and spatial), and (4) limit motorized access across the prescription area.

DESIRED CONDITION

The landscapes of this area retain a natural, forested appearance. A mid- to late-successional forest greater than 40 years of age dominates the landscape with a continuous forested canopy greater than 50 percent of the prescription area. The area is interspersed with both forest communities greater than 100 years of age and herbaceous openings providing wildlife habitat diversity and visual diversity.

The landscape character is natural-appearing. Natural processes are the primary agents of strong change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural-appearing managed change occurs, but affects a limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low to moderate contrast and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management usually does not occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change. Evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is infrequent.

During most of the year, occasional encounters with other forest visitors can be expected; however, these encounters will be more frequent during spring and fall hunting seasons. This area provides excellent opportunities for bird watching, wildlife viewing, fishing, and hunting. Forest visitors on foot, horses, or bikes may experience some solitude in portions of this prescription area where roads are managed as closed.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Monitoring of visitor satisfaction and expectations is on a special study or incidental basis. Search and rescue is not readily available. When needed, motorized operations are usually constrained by requirements for special case-by-case permissions. Environmental effects of recovery operations are planned to be minimal and promptly rehabilitated.

Facilities are primarily non-structural, for example: roads, trails, tables, tent pads, etc. Structures are uncommon. Access may be possible by passenger car in good weather, but roads are not designed or maintained for them. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. In these areas existing facilities are maintained above a resource protection level but without a strong emphasis on visitor expectations. Capacity of facilities is typically low and they are rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting

visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities.

8.A.1 MIX OF SUCCESSIONAL FOREST HABITATS

The mix of forest communities desired would vary by the land type associations in which this prescription is allocated; however, the canopy generally consists of a mixed hardwood forest composed primarily of oaks and hickories in the uplands. Poplars, birch, and hemlock increase as moisture availability increases down slope to the coves. Southern yellow pines increase as sites become drier toward the ridge tops. The overstory is relatively closed, multi-layered, and moderately to densely stocked. A moderate stocking of 60–80 basal area per acre is desirable when cerulean warbler is known to exist within the prescription area. The midstory is also multi-layered composed of a diversity of shrubs, vines, grape arbors, and saplings.

Tree ages vary from area to area, but the focus is on oaks and hickories in their prime mast-producing years, between 40 and 100 years of age. A minimum of 35 percent of forest communities in this mast-bearing age group is desirable. Trees greater than 120 years of age occur commonly as individuals, groups, or large areas. The resulting landscape structure of this land allocation provides linkages to large- and medium-sized old-growth patches. Cavity trees, cull trees, standing dead trees, and down logs are common throughout the area as a result of natural mortality.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained. Expansion of existing openings and/or creation of new openings may occur. Non-invasive nonnatives are sometimes used when establishing food plants for wildlife, but native species are used where feasible and cost effective. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Forest management activities and prescribed fire play an important role in the maintenance of many of the forested communities found throughout this management prescription. These activities are frequently used to encourage oak sprouting and reduce competition from more shade-tolerant species. They also help to restore and maintain T&E species habitats.

These areas will be characterized by 60 to 80 percent or more of the forest cover being mid and late-successional forests. A relatively low percentage of acreage is old enough for potential old growth, and 4 to 10 percent of forested land will be in early-successional forest conditions.

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forested conditions. The area will provide habitat conditions suitable for a mix of game (black bear, eastern gray squirrel, eastern wild turkey, and white-tailed deer) and non-game species (Acadian flycatcher, eastern fox squirrel, eastern wood-peewee, downy woodpecker, and southern pygmy shrew). Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species.

Early successional habitats will be dispersed throughout the area. Early-successional forest patches vary in size, but many are larger than 20 acres to provide optimal conditions for dependent species. Where compatible with other multiple-use and ecological objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will commonly be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species. The actual percentage of early successional habitat, including regeneration harvest areas, will vary across time and space based on site-specific habitat objectives, actual occurrences of natural disturbances, size and types of permanent openings, private land influences, and the efficiency of scheduling management activities.

8.A.1 MIX OF SUCCESSIONAL FOREST HABITATS

Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of 5 to 1,000 acres across the landscape and affecting this prescription, but the severity of effect will be mitigated. The range of canopy breaks includes frequent small gaps created by individual tree mortality, occasional insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately thirty acres, and rare large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-8.A.1-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in mid- to late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 20 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and 4 to 10 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

8.A.1-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

8.A.1-002 Using lease terms for environmental protection, Federal mineral leases and mineral material authorizations would be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

8.A.1-003 Stands may be actively managed to reduce the risks and hazards of damage from native and nonnative invasive pests.

8.A.1-004 Indigenous forest pests are kept within acceptable levels through integrated pest management techniques. Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to reduce hazards to visitors; for safety or legal reasons; to protect adjacent resources; or to protect ecosystem composition, structure, and function.

8.A.1-005 Forest pests not native to the area are minimized through judicious use of controls, silvicultural practices, and timely salvage of damaged trees. Actions need to be consistent with Forest service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and SPB EIS.

Recreation

8.A.1-006 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS setting RN2.

8.A.1-007 OHVs would be allowed on designated travel routes.

Scenery

8.A.1-008 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	L	L	L	L	L

Facilities, Roads, and Access

8.A.1-009 System roads may be constructed within the area but total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

8.A.1-010 This prescription includes portions of the Joe Gap and Kelly Ridge inventoried roadless areas. Management actions in any one of them will not violate Forest Service roadless criteria at the scale of each entire inventoried roadless area.

Timber Management

8.A.1-011 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Successional Stage Management

8.A.1-012 Creation of early-successional habitat is limited to 10 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

8.A.2 FOREST INTERIOR, MID- TO LATE-SUCCESSIONAL FOREST HABITATS

EMPHASIS

The emphasis is on providing optimal to suitable habitat for a variety of plant and animal populations associated with mid- to late-successional deciduous forest habitats, while maintaining habitat for forest interior species. Management activities are designed to:

- maintain forest cover over more than 70 percent of the prescription area;
- increase vertical vegetative diversity (canopy, sub-canopy, shrub, and herbaceous layers all present and fairly well developed);
- maintain hard and soft mast production;
- provide a dispersed system of permanent and transitory openings;
- control motorized access across the prescription area; and
- minimize habitat fragmentation from significant linear rights-of-way.

DESIRED CONDITION

The area contains a representation of deciduous and mixed hardwood-pine forest community types primarily in mid- and late-successional conditions. The mix of the different forest communities will depend on the land type association in which this prescription is applied. The area is dominated by interior forest conditions, with large-diameter trees being common throughout. Communities are structurally diverse, with occasional small gaps occurring from natural events and low intensity management (small areas). Communities on xeric sites will contain smaller trees and less diverse structure than those on mesic sites.

The landscape character is natural-appearing. Natural processes are the primary agents of strong change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural-appearing managed change occurs, but affects a limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low to moderate contrast and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management usually does not occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change. Evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is infrequent.

Existing openings or old fields may be maintained or expanded and new openings may be created. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Recreation experience will be provided in a landscape character that will be primarily natural appearing, although evidence of forest management activities may be seen (i.e., tree stumps or logging roads). This area will provide moderate to large tracts of recreation opportunities in remote settings with a nonmotorized emphasis. There may be existing trails with no constructed convenience facilities. Human activities may be evident in some places. Visitors will occasionally see other people especially near the open roads in this area. Outdoor skills will be important for visitors in the more remote portions of this area. Recreation uses are mostly dispersed. Bird watching, hiking, backpacking, dispersed camping, wildlife viewing, hunting, and fishing are typical activities available.

No visitor information is provided to create any specific expectation of amenities. Signs are very limited. Visitors are expected to be rather skilled in the outdoors, self-reliant and well prepared. Visitor's expectations and satisfaction will be monitored.

Facilities are typically roads and trails, and structures are rare. Existing facilities are maintained in serviceable condition with the emphasis on resource protection. They are not improved beyond their original design. In these areas no new facilities are provided. Access may be restricted to foot travel, and roads may be open only seasonally. Roads may require high-clearance vehicles. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section.

Approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover in these areas would be mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophes will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately thirty acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

There would be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forest conditions. Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species. Habitat for a broad mix of species will also be provided. The landscape structure of this allocation provides linkages to large and medium-sized old-growth patches. Cavity trees, cull trees, standing dead trees, and down logs are common throughout the area as a result of natural mortality.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends.Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

8.A.2 FOREST INTERIOR, MID- TO LATE-SUCCESSIONAL FOREST HABITATS

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-8.A.2-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

8.A.2-001 Special uses may be authorized if consistent and compatible with the goals and objectives of this area.

8.A.2-002 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

8.A.2-003 Using lease terms for environmental protection, Federal mineral leases and mineral material authorizations would be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

8.A.2-004 Stands may be actively managed to reduce the risks and hazards of damage from native and nonnative invasive pests.

8.A.2-005 Indigenous forest pests are kept within acceptable levels through integrated pest management techniques. Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled when necessary to reduce hazards to visitors; for safety or legal reasons; to protect adjacent resources; or to protect ecosystem composition, structure, and function.

8.A.2-006 Forest pests not native to the area are minimized through judicious use of controls, silvicultural practices, and timely salvage of damaged trees. Actions need to be consistent with Forest Service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and the SPB EIS.

Recreation

8.A.2-007 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS setting RN2.

8.A.2-008 OHV trails: Only access points (trailheads) or connecting trails allowed on a case-by-case basis.

Scenery

8.A.2-009 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	M	M	M	M	M

Facilities, Roads, and Access

8.A.2-010 The density of open roads over which the Forest Service has jurisdiction will be maintained at no more than 1.5 miles per 1,000 acres.

Timber Management

8.A.2-011 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Succession Stage Management

8.A.2-012 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

8.A.2-013 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

8.D AND 8.D.1 RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER HABITAT MANAGEMENT AREAS

EMPHASIS

Within the HMA (8.D), the management emphasis is to provide suitable-to-optimal habitat conditions and management activities that contribute to the recovery of the red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) on the Oconee National Forest. The habitat conditions needed by the RCW will be predominately southern pine forest in mid- and late-successional conditions.

Within the Sub-HMA (8.D.1) the management emphasis is to provide suitable-to-optimal habitat conditions in areas containing small RCW populations within the larger, designated habitat management area (8.D). These RCW populations are at the greatest risk of local extirpation and in need of immediate, aggressive management action to create and protect suitable habitat.

Management will be based on the *Management of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Its Habitat on National Forests in the Southern Region* (RCW FEIS, June 1995), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *RCW Recovery Plan*, January 2003.

Standards are written to reflect a Management Intensity Level (MIL) of 4, the most intensive level of management directed at conservation of the RCW.

DESIRED CONDITION

The desired conditions for 8.D.1 are the same as those for 8.D with some differences in management priority. Management prescription 8.D.1 is nested within prescription 8.D. The differences between the two prescriptions are due to the actual presence of the species in the sub-habitat management area (8.D.1).

The HMA contains a representation of pine and mixed pine-hardwood forest community types, primarily in mid- and late-successional conditions, which would sustain RCW populations at recovery plan objectives. Other forest community types would make up a smaller proportion of the area. Old, flat-topped pine trees may be found throughout the area. Within the Sub-HMA pine stands will have an open understory, having a park-like appearance. The RCW's nesting and foraging habitat consists of mid to late successional pines with an open understory. Dormant-season and growing-season prescribed fires along with basal area reductions of the pines will occur to maintain the foraging areas.

The pine communities are continuous and structurally simple (pine overstory with native grass/herbaceous/shrub understory less than three feet high), shaped primarily by the use of growing season/dormant season prescribed fire, with occasional small gaps occurring from natural events and management. Evidence may be seen of forest management activities such as tree stumps or logging roads. These are needed to sustain a flow of pine habitats (RCW-foraging/nesting habitat) for the long term. Mesic hardwood communities, bottomland hardwood communities, and riparian habitats dissect the area.

These areas will be characterized by 60 to 80 percent or more of the forest cover being mid and late-successional forests with a relatively low percentage of acreage old enough for potential old growth. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 10 percent of the land area of each aggregated

or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres, but the severity of effect will be moderated by low intensity management. The range of canopy breaks includes frequent small gaps created by individual tree mortality, occasional insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately thirty acres, to rare large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

These areas will be characterized by an intermediate mix of forest successional stages. Mid- and late-successional forests will be common, but 4 to 10 percent of forested land will be in early-successional forest conditions. Early-successional forest patches vary in size, but many are larger than 20 acres to provide optimal conditions for dependent species. Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest, and interaction among early-successional wildlife species. Mid and late-succesional stages of pine cover type will be characterized by open canopy, generally without a hardwood midstory, and a patchy grass-herb-shrub type forest floor cover.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained. Expansion of existing openings and/or creation of new openings may occur. Non-invasive nonnatives are sometimes used when establishing food plants for wildlife, but native species are used where feasible and cost effective. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Permanent wildlife openings will occur. There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forested conditions. Restoration and protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species. Habitat for a broad mix of species will also be provided.

Within the HMA the landscape character is predominately natural-appearing. Managed change is the primary cause of change in the visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is frequent. Managed changes cumulatively affect approximately one-third of the land area of this prescription each decade. Management changes are designed to be moderate contrast or less and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management usually does not occur specifically to moderate visual contrasts of natural change. Within the Sub-HMA recreation experience will be provided in a landscape character that will be natural appearing. Dispersed use is emphasized with existing facilities maintained. New facilities are not added. Visitor use near, or within, RCW cluster sites is discouraged.

Management is constrained to remain compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. The recreation use emphasis is on dispersed activities such as hunting, fishing, or hiking, but localized and limited development facilitates those uses.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest. Translocation of RCW will be used as needed to restore the species to levels defined in the Recovery Plan.

8.D AND 8.D.1 RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER HABITAT MANAGEMENT AREAS

There is a high level of collaboration with USFWS, universities, State Heritage programs, sister Forests and others to leverage knowledge and experience.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Visitors are informed through a variety of media and materials, as well as a limited number and kind of outlets, to expect basic amenities. Acquiring the most complete and current information typically requires contacting a Forest Service employee or visiting a Forest Service office. Basic information is available at visitor information outlets in and near the Forest. Signs permit navigation with minimal concern or confusion. Visitors are not expected to be very self-reliant, and supplies or services are usually available nearby at private businesses. Visitor satisfaction and expectations are routinely monitored on-site with voluntary response cards and personal contacts. Search, rescue, and recovery operations are available quickly and motorized operations are not constrained by Plan direction.

Facilities include a mix of structural and non-structural types. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. In these areas, existing facilities are well-maintained and new facilities are provided with strong safeguards for the quality of the recreation experience and environmental values. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is incrementally changed in response to visitor demand and expectations but facilities on private lands are not duplicated. Facilities may be staffed during daylight hours during the entire recreation season and, where camping is available, a contact person may be available twenty-four hours a day in season on a volunteer, partnership or similar basis. Security is primarily on a routine patrol basis.

GOALS

Goal-8.D-01 Meet the USFWS Revised Recovery Plan (2003) population objective of 250 breeding pairs for the combined Oconee National Forest and Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge in cooperation with the Piedmont Refuge.

Goal-8.D-02 Restore lightning-ignition, growing season fire as an ecological dynamic in the RCW HMA and Sub-HMA.

OBJECTIVES

OBJ-8.D-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in mid- to late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 20 percent of forested acres in late-

successional forest, including old growth; and 4 to 10 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

OBJ-8.D-02 Achieve a total of at least 42 active clusters; that is, an increase of 22 clusters over the 2002 level, within 13 years of Plan implementation. (based on 2003 RCW Recovery plan ACT)

OBJ-8.D-03 Provide an annual supply of unoccupied recruitment clusters equal to 10 percent of total active clusters in the population on the HMA and SubHMA combined each containing either three suitable artificial cavities and two starts, or four suitable cavities.

OBJ-8.D-04 Provide 120 acres of foraging habitat meeting the standards for 'good quality' for each active cluster and recruitment stand within seven years of Plan implementation. Do nothing to limit foraging habitat except as provided for under accelerated pine restoration.

OBJ-8.D-05 Within the Red-cockaded Woodpecker Habitat Management Area (MRx 8.D and 8.D.1 combined), manage to keep the Southern Pine Beetle hazard rating at Low in any year.

OBJ-8.D-06 Prescribe burn approximately 16,000 acres on the Oconee annually within the RCW HMA (MRx 8.D and 8.D.1 combined) using both dormant and growing season burns. This average annual acreage should result in fire return periods of 1-5 years in suitable habitats.

OBJ-8.D-07 Reach and maintain through natural increase and/or augmentation by translocation a five-year rolling average annual increase in the existing RCW population of between 5 and 10 percent

OBJ-8.D-08 Within the RCW HMA (MRx 8.D and 8.D.1 combined) annually thin an average of 2,500 acres of pine cover type for each of the first seven years of plan implementation and thereafter at a rate that will maintain southern pine beetle hazard at Low.

OBJ-8.D-09 Within the RCW HMA (MRx 8.D and 8.D.1 combined) regenerate an average of 425 acres annually of pine cover type.during this plan cycle.

OBJ-8.D-10 Within the RCW HMA (MRx 8.D and 8.D.1 combined) control midstory vegetation on 4,000 acres annually during this plan cycle.

OBJ-8.D-11 Develop implementation guidance for restoration of longleaf pine as RCW habitat within three years of plan implementation.

OBJ-8.D-12 Meet Forest Service requirements for the use of managed natural ignition fire within three years of plan implementation.

STANDARDS FOR 8.D AND 8.D.1

Lands and Special Uses

8.D-001 New utility corridors or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

8.D-002 Using stipulations such as no-surface occupancy, controlled surface use, and timing limitations, or lease terms to protect the habitat, Federal mineral leases would be allowed.

8.D-003 Mineral material authorizations with conditions to protect habitats in the area would be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

8.D-004 Manage the MRx area to provide a minimum of 120 acres of "good quality foraging habitat," as defined in the current Revised Recovery Plan, for each active and recruitment cluster.

RCW HMA	2002 Active Clusters	Short Term Population Objective (breeding pairs)	Long-Term Population Objective (breeding pairs)	Population Designation
Oconee/Hitchiti	20	25	176	Recovery

8.D-005 Insect and disease outbreaks will be controlled when necessary to protect RCW habitat and populations; to reduce hazards to visitors; for safety or legal reasons; to protect adjacent resources; or to protect ecosystem composition, structure, and function.

8.D-006 Recognize that beyond 60 years high hazard littleleaf soils are incapable of supporting sustainable high-quality RCW nesting habitat and reforest to loblolly or shortleaf pine only if necessary to meet RCW foraging habitat requirements.

Fire Management

8.D-007 Protect cavity trees from fire during prescribed burning operations.

8.D-008 Do not cut cavity trees or start trees killed by insects, disease, lightening or other causes.

Recreation

8.D-009 Dispersed recreation activities away from RCW cluster sites would be permitted.

8.D-010 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1 and RN2.

8.D-011 Existing four-wheel-drive roads are allowed on a case-by-case basis. Existing connecting trails to ATV and motorcycle routes are allowed on a case-by-case basis. OHV systems are not an emphasis.

Scenery

8.D-012 Management activi ties are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	L	L	L	L	L

Facilities, Roads, and Access

8.D.013 Do not build system roads or motorized system trails inside of or within 500 feet of RCW cluster sites.

Timber Management

8.D-014 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production, except that cluster sites, replacement stands, and recruitment stands are unsuitable, not appropriate for timber production.

Successional Stage Management

8.D-015 Creation of early-successional habitat is limited to a maximum of 10 percent of forested acres within this prescription. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Protection

8.D-016 Use only two-aged or uneven-aged silvicultural systems to regenerate RCW habitat, where native pine (not off-site pine species) forests are present.

8.D-017 Due to high risk for SPB and littleleaf, the 80-year rotation age option for shortleaf pines and loblolly pine will be used.

8.D-018 Retain 40 square feet of basal area in regeneration areas as required for MIL 4.

8.D-019 Limit regeneration areas in native (not off-site pine species) pine and pine-hardwood stands to 25 acres maximum size as required for MIL 4.
.

8.D-020 Use even-aged or two-aged silvicultural systems to restore native pine species to suitable sites. All existing trees of the desired species shall be retained except where distribution is clumped and basal area is >70 square feet. These clumps may be thinned to improve habitat conditions.

8.D-021 During silvicultural treatments, retain as first priority old, flat-topped relict trees, potential cavity trees, and scarred old pines.

8.D-022 Where uneven-aged management is used to manage RCW habitat, 20 or more trees per acre of pines at least 14" dbh and 60 years of age are retained within foraging habitat.

8.D-023 Where uneven-aged management is used to manage RCW habitat, in active and recruitment clusters retain 5 or more trees per acre of pines at least 120 years of age for longleaf and shortleaf pine, or 100 years of age for loblolly, slash, or pond pine.

8.D-024 Emphasize restoration of native pine types. Pine can be restored at an accelerated rate in areas more than 1.5 air miles from active clusters. The 0 – 10 and 0 – 30 year age classes cannot exceed 10 percent and 30 percent respectively over the next 20 years. Foraging habitat for recruitment clusters more than 1.5 air miles from an active cluster can be reduced by 50 percent.

8.D-025 Place recruitment clusters (a set of clusters in suitable habitat somewhat removed from other groups) no closer than one-quarter (0.25) mile and no farther than two miles from existing active clusters, except that recruitment clusters for use in reintroduction or the development of new population segments must be highly aggregated.

8.D-026 Increase the number of recruitment clusters above 10 percent when reintroduction or the development of new population segments is being done.

STANDARDS SPECIFIC TO 8.D.1

Recreation

8.D.1-001 Recreational facilities will not be developed that direct visitor use within an RCW cluster site or within 300 feet of it. Pre-existing recreation use may be constrained if a cluster becomes established within this distance.

Timber Management

8.D.1-002 Do not reforest sites rated high hazard for littleleaf with shortleaf pine.

8.E.3 HIGH-ELEVATION, EARLY-SUCCESSIONAL HABITAT

High elevation early successional habitat is associated with bird species of conservation concern. The Chattahoochee National Forest accounts for about 96.9 percent of all land in Georgia over 3,000 feet. Approximately 52,000 acres of that, or 47.5 percent, is unavailable for sustained habitat management due to previous withdrawals above the authority of the Regional Forester. Of the remaining 52.5-percent, excluding steep slope and AT corridor results in about 18-percent available. This prescription is designed to meet conservation concerns on the very limited land area.

EMPHASIS

Sustain a distribution of early-successional grass/shrub and seedling/sapling habitat in high elevations (3,000 feet and higher). These areas will be managed to create and maintain a structurally diverse landscape with a mix of forest successional conditions.

DESIRED CONDITION

The area contains a mix of forest successional classes. The mix of the different forest communities will depend on the land type associations and elevations in which this prescription is applied. Communities are structurally diverse, with occasional gaps in the canopy occurring from natural events. There is evidence of forest management activities (i.e., tree stumps or closed access roads) in the area. The development of permanent forest openings containing native vegetation may occur. The early successional patches will contain a mix of herbaceous and shrub/sapling areas with mid- to late-successional forest communities making up a smaller proportion of the area.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are usually expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Intrepretive services may be provided communicating the importance of the habitat. Monitoring of visitor satisfaction and expectations is on a special study or incidental basis. Search and rescue is not readily available. When needed, motorized operations are usually constrained by requirements on a case-by-case basis. Environmental effects of recovery operations are planned to be minimal and promptly rehabilitated.

The landscape character is natural appearing. Natural processes are the primary agents of strong change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural appearing managed change occurs, but affects a limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low to moderate contrast and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management usually does not occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change.

Facilities are primarily non-structural, for example: roads, trails, tables, tent pads, etc. Structures are uncommon. Access may be possible by passenger car in good weather, but roads are not designed or maintained for them. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. In these areas existing facilities are maintained above a resource protection level but without a strong emphasis on visitor expectations. Capacity of facilities is typically low and they are

8.E.3 HIGH-ELEVATION, EARLY-SUCCESSIONAL HABITAT

rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities.

All vegetation management would be based upon the desired future conditions for the various species that require higher elevation structural diversity. The desired terrestrial conditions will provide moderate- to high-quality watershed conditions in those watersheds where applied. The resulting landscape structure of this allocation provides a forest matrix considered marginal for linking the large- and medium-sized old-growth patches.

The range of canopy breaks includes infrequent insect or disease-killed groups and salvage harvests of up to several acres, habitat harvest patches of approximately thirty acres, and rare large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

These areas will be characterized by a mix of forest successional stages, with an emphasis on early-successional forests. Mid- and late-successional forests will be common, but 10 to 17 percent of forested land may be in early-successional forest conditions. Early-successional forest patches vary in size, but may be larger than 30 acres to provide optimal conditions for dependent species. Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by management actions will be clustered on the landscape to mimic natural processes or to maintain blocks of late-successional forest, and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

Rare communities and associated species would continue to exist in the area, including disturbance-dependent communities that require active management.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-8.E.3-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 20 percent of forested acres in mid- to late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 10 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and 10 to 17 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

8.E.3-001 New utility corridor or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

8.E.3-002 Using lease terms to protect habitat, Federal mineral leases would be allowed.

8.E.3-003 Mineral material authorizations would be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

8.E.3-004 Stands may be actively managed to reduce the risks and hazards of damage from native and nonnative invasive pests.

8.E.3-005 Indigenous forest pests are kept within acceptable levels through integrated pest management techniques.

8.E.3-006 Forest pests not native to the area are minimized through judicious use of controls, silvicultural practices, and timely salvage of damaged tree. Actions need to be consistent with Forest service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and SPB EIS.

8.E.3-007 To achieve the structural habitat conditions for ruffed grouse, less than 20 sq. ft./acre residual basal area is retained in even-aged and two-aged regeneration units, with oaks of mast producing size favored as residuals.

Recreation

8.E.3-008 ROS settings would be RN1 and RN2.

8.E.3-009 Existing trails connecting to OHV routes may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. OHV systems are not an emphasis. There may be some seasonal restrictions.

8.E.3-010 OHVs: Existing four-wheel-drive roads may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. No new OHV trails.

Scenery

8.E.3-011 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	L	L	L	L	L

Timber Management

8.E.3-012 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Successional Stage Management

8.E.3-013 Creation of early-successional habitat is limited to 17 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than 2 acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

9.A.1 SOURCE WATER PROTECTION WATERSHEDS

The areas managed for source water protection are:

Upper Etowah River – Camp Frank Merrill
Davidson Creek – City of Toccoa (backup reservoir)
Yahoola Creek – City of Dahlonega, Lumpkin County

EMPHASIS

The primary management emphasis for these areas is to maintain healthy watersheds that provide water for withdrawal for treatment and municipal use.

DESIRED CONDITION

Management will occur to restore watershed function where human activities (i.e., roads, trails, or dispersed sites) are degrading or have degraded water quality. Water quality will meet the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act and applicable Georgia public drinking water regulations.

Recreation experience will be provided in a landscape character that will be natural appearing. Human activities may be evident in some places. Visitors will occasionally see other people especially near the few open roads in this area. A non-motorized trail system will provide the predominant means of access. Closed roads will be available for non-motorized uses. Recreation emphasis will be dispersed, such as backpacking, bird watching, dispersed camping, fishing, hiking, hunting, mountain biking, and wildlife viewing.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Monitoring of visitor satisfaction and expectations is on a special study or incidental basis. Search and rescue is not readily available. When needed, motorized operations are usually constrained by requirements for special case-by-case permissions. Environmental effects of recovery operations are planned to be minimal and promptly rehabilitated. Unneeded roads would be decommissioned and managed for foot travel.

The primary landscape character is natural-appearing with natural processes the dominant agents of strong change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural-appearing managed change occurs but affects a very limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is rare.

Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Sediment from roads or trails is not reaching streams. Total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section but half or less of the road mileage is open roads.

9.A.1 SOURCE WATER PROTECTION WATERSHEDS

Management is constrained to remain compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. The recreation use emphasis is on dispersed activities such as hunting, fishing, or hiking but localized and limited development facilitates those uses.

The mix and types of forest communities will depend on the landtype associations in which this prescription is applied. Forest management activities such as prescribed fire and silvicultural treatments may be used to restore riparian ecosystems and maintain a healthy forest within the watershed. Wild land fires are generally controlled to minimize fire intensity and overall acreage burned.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained, but no expansion of openings or creation of new permanent openings of this type occurs. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Human-caused and naturally-created forest openings with trees less than 10 years old will occur on up to 4 percent of the land area of each aggregated or contiguous block of this management prescription. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres. The range of canopy breaks includes common small gaps created by individual tree mortality, infrequent insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately thirty acres, and infrequent large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire.

Aquatic habitats and associated species within or downstream of this area will be maintained or improved due to the resulting terrestrial and riparian conditions within this prescription.

Streams and water bodies are regularly and frequently inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVES

OBJ-9.A.1-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including

old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

OBJ-9.A.1-02 Any specific soil and water mitigation needed (in addition to the Forest Plan direction) for source water protection watersheds will be determined as watershed assessment and project planning are completed.

STANDARDS

Water Quality

9.A.1-001 Water quality will meet or exceed the standards mandated by the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act.

9.A.1-002 Determine any specific soil and water mitigation needed (in addition to the Forest Plan direction) for source water protection watersheds as watershed assessment and project planning are completed.

Lands and Special Uses

9.A.1-003 New utility corridors or communication sites generally will not be authorized within this watershed. Existing uses will be monitored for compatibility with the goals and objectives of this prescription prior to reauthorization.

Minerals and Geology

9.A.1-004 Using no-surface occupancy stipulations, Federal mineral leases would be allowed.

9.A.1-005 Mineral material authorizations to administer the watershed and to restore riparian areas may be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

9.A.1-006 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled where they threaten the forested condition of the watershed on public or private lands, where TES or locally rare species and their habitats may be adversely impacted, to reduce hazards to visitors, or as needed for safety and legal reasons.

9.A.1-007 Eradication may be considered for newly discovered nonnative invasive pests.

9.A.1-008 Biological control may be considered for established nonnative pests through the release of natural enemies.

9.A.1-009 Salvage timber may be cut and removed after a catastrophe or to control an insect outbreak.

9.A.1-010 Broadcast application of herbicides will not occur except in epidemic non-native invasive plant species situations.

9.A.1-011 Aerial application of pesticides will be used only if epidemic conditions occur. Actions need to be consistent with Forest Service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and SPB EIS.

Fire Management

9.A.1-012 Use the minimum amount of ground, vegetation, or stream disturbance that is effective to achieve fire management objectives.

Recreation

9.A.1-013 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN2, SPM and SPNM.

9.A.1-014 Existing four-wheel drive roads and trails will be decommissioned. There will be no new designated OHV trails.

Scenery

9.A.1-015 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	M	M	M	M	M

Facilities, Roads, and Access

9.A.1-016 The density of open roads over which the Forest Service has jurisdiction will be maintained at no more than 1.5 miles per 1,000 acres at the scale of this prescription for each watershed.

Timber Management

9.A.1-017 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Succession Stage Management

9.A.1-018 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

9.A.1-019 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

9.A.3 WATERSHED RESTORATION AREAS

The areas managed for watershed restoration are within the following watersheds, which are described in Chapter 4:

Tallulah River
Chattooga River – North, East, West Forks
Tugaloo River/Panther Creek
Broad River – North Fork

EMPHASIS

Management emphasis would be on improving conditions where past land uses have degraded water quality or soil productivity. The long-term goal of these watersheds is to showcase restored and resilient watersheds where proper multiple use management practices are applied. When this goal is achieved, these watersheds are allocated to a different management prescription.

DESIRED CONDITION

Aquatic habitats and associated species within or downstream of this area will be improved due to terrestrial and riparian conditions within this prescription area. The aquatic habitats will be capable of supporting optimal populations of aquatic species, which reflect the respective habitat associations.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Visitor expectations and satisfaction are monitored. Search and rescue is not readily available. When needed, motorized operations are usually constrained by requirements for special case-by-case permissions. Environmental effects of recovery operations are planned to be minimal and promptly rehabilitated.

Facilities are primarily non-structural; for example, roads, trails, tables, tent pads, etc. Structures are uncommon. Access may be possible by passenger car in good weather, but roads are not designed or maintained for them. Unneeded roads will be decommissioned. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Sediment from roads or trails is not reaching streams. Total system road density is approximately equal to the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. However, open roads are a lesser proportion than average. In these areas existing facilities are maintained above a resource protection level but without a strong emphasis on visitor expectations. Capacity of facilities is typically low and they are rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities.

Management is constrained to remain compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. The recreation use emphasis

is on dispersed activities such as hunting, fishing, or hiking, but localized and limited development facilitates those uses.

These areas will be characterized by approximately 85 percent or more of the forest cover being mid-successional, late-successional, or potential old growth forests. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will periodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres, but the severity of effect will be moderated using low intensity management. The range of canopy breaks includes frequent small gaps created by individual tree mortality, occasional insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent timber harvest units of approximately thirty acres, to rare large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire. The mix and types of forest communities will depend on the landtype associations where this prescription occurs. Rare communities will be restored, maintained, or enhanced.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained, but no expansion of openings or creation of new permanent openings of this type occurs. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Streams and water bodies are regularly and frequently inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize stream conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-9.A.3-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

9.A.3-001 New utility corridor or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

9.A.3-002 Using no-surface occupancy or controlled surface use stipulations or lease terms, Federal mineral leases would be allowed.

9.A.3-003 Mineral material authorizations to administer the watershed and to restore riparian areas may be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

9.A.3-004 Insect and disease outbreaks may be controlled where they threaten the forested condition of the watershed on public or private lands, where TES or locally rare species and their habitats may be adversely impacted, to reduce hazards to visitors, or as needed for safety and legal reasons.

9.A.3-005 Eradication may be used for nonnative invasive pests.

9.A.3-006 Biological control may be considered for established nonnative pests through the release of natural enemies.

9.A.3-007 Salvage timber may be cut and removed after a catastrophe or to control an insect outbreak.

9.A.3-008 Broadcast application of herbicides will not occur except in epidemic non-native invasive plant species situations.

9.A.3-009 Aerial application of pesticides will be used only if epidemic conditions occur. Actions need to be consistent with Forest Service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and SPB EIS.

Recreation

9.A.3-010 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1 and RN2.

9.A.3-011 Existing four-wheel-drive roads and existing trails connecting to OHV routes will be allowed on a case-by-case. There will be an emphasis on monitoring and repairing or closing existing trails.

9.A.3-012 There will be no new designated OHV trails.

Scenery

9.A.3-013 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	M	M	M	L	L

Facilities, Roads, and Access

9.A.3-014 The density of open roads over which the Forest Service has jurisdiction will be maintained at no more than 1.5 miles per 1,000 acres at the scale of this prescription for each watershed.

Timber Management

9.A.3-015 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Successional Stage Management

9.A.3-016 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than 2 acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

9.A.3-017 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

9.F RARE COMMUNITIES

EMPHASIS

Rare communities are assemblages of plants and animals that occupy a small portion of the landscape, but contribute significantly to plant and animal diversity. They generally are limited in number of occurrences, are small in size, and have relatively discrete boundaries. Rare communities, wherever they occur on the forest, will be managed under this prescription to ensure their contribution to meeting goals for community diversity, endangered and threatened species recovery, and species viability. All known rare community sites are allocated to this prescription. As new rare community sites are found, they will be added to this prescription without plan amendment, unless such additions would result in large shifts in land allocation or expected benefits and outputs.

DESIRED CONDITION

Rare communities exhibit the composition, structure, and function necessary to support vigorous populations of species characteristic of the community, including relevant federally-listed threatened and endangered species, and species at risk of losing viability. Ecological disturbances are at the frequency and intensity needed to maintain desired composition, structure, and function. Generally, natural forces are sufficient to maintain these conditions; however, in some cases environmental factors have changed to the extent that natural processes are prevented or hindered from maintaining the community. In these cases, management activities used to restore or maintain desired conditions, such as prescribed burning or vegetation cutting, may be evident.

Beyond restoration and maintenance activities, human-caused alteration of rare communities is not evident. Recreational access may be limited by signs and barriers where necessary to protect community integrity. Interpretive signs or other information may be made available where it is likely to promote public knowledge of rare communities and improve community protection.

Only exterior boundary roads or pre-existing 'pass-through' roads are open to public use. Access roads to the boundary are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area.

The following rare communities are covered by this prescription:

Wetland Communities

Appalachian Highlands Bogs, Fens, Seeps, and Ponds

These rare communities are characterized by 1) soils that are semi-permanently to permanently saturated as a result of groundwater seepage, perched water tables, rainfall, or beaver activity, but otherwise are generally nonalluvial; and 2) presence of wetland-associated species such as sphagnum, ferns, and sedges. Dominant vegetation may be herbs, shrubs, trees, or some complex of the three. Ponds in this group include limesink, karst, and depression ponds, which may hold areas of shallow open water for significant portions of the year. Also included are all impoundments and associated wetlands resulting from beaver activity. Artificial impoundments are not included unless they support significant populations or associations of species at risk. These communities may

9.F RARE COMMUNITIES

be found in both the Appalachian and Piedmont regions. Primary management needs are protection from non-target management disturbance and resource impacts, particularly to local hydrology. Periodic vegetation management may be necessary to maintain desired herbaceous and/or shrubby composition at some sites. These communities include Mafic and Calcareous Fens, Sphagnum and Shrub Bogs, Swamp Forest-Bog Complex, Mountain Ponds, Seasonally Dry Sinkhole Ponds, and Beaver Pond and Wetland Complex as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and all Associations within the following Ecological Groups as defined by NatureServe (2001a):

458-15	Appalachian Highlands Wooded Depression Ponds
458-2	Appalachian and Interior Highlands Limesink and Karst Wooded Ponds
470-10	Appalachian Highlands Forested Bogs
470-20	Appalachian Highlands Forested Acid Seeps
470-50	Appalachian Highlands Forested Fens and Calcareous Seeps
475-10	Appalachian Highlands Acid Herbaceous Seeps
475-20	Appalachian Highlands Alkaline Herbaceous Fens and Seeps
475-30	Appalachian and Interior Highlands Herbaceous Depression Ponds and Pondshores

Appalachian Highlands Riverine Vegetation

These rare communities are characterized by 1) sites adjacent to or within stream channels that are exposed to periodic flooding and scour, and 2) presence of significant populations or associations of species at risk. These communities may be found in both Appalachian and Piedmont regions. Primary management needs are protection from disturbance during development of road crossings, and maintenance of desirable in-stream flows. These communities include River Gravel-Cobble Bars as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and the rare Associations within the following Ecological Groups as defined by NatureServe (2001a):

457-10	Appalachian Highlands Riverine Vegetation
457-30	Rocky Riverbeds
457-40	Appalachian Highlands Riverscour Vegetation

Forest Communities

Table Mountain Pine Forest and Woodland

This community is characterized by a dominant or significant component of table mountain pine (*Pinus pungens*) in the overstory often in combination with pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*). It is found in the Appalachian region. Primary management needs are maintenance and expansion of existing occurrences, using thinning and prescribed fire. This community corresponds to Table Mountain Pine/Pitch Pine Woodlands as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and all Associations within the following Ecological Group as defined by NatureServe (2001a):

401-80	Appalachian Highlands Pitch and Table Mountain Pine Woodlands

Basic Mesic Forests

These communities are characterized by a complex multi-storied deciduous canopy and rich and diverse understories of calciphilic herbs, underlain by high-base geologic substrates. On moderate to high elevation sites, these communities are typically found in protected coves, and can be distinguished from more acidic mesic cove forests by the abundance of species such as white basswood (*Tilia americana*), yellow buckeye (*Aesculus flava*), black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), faded trillium (*Trillium discolor*), sweet white trillium (*Trillium simile*), black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*), blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), whorled horsebalm (*Collinsonia verticillata*), mock orange

(*Philadelphus inodorus*), sweet shrub (*Calycanthus floridus*), sweet cicely (*Ozmorhiza* spp.), doll's eyes (*Actaea racemosa*), maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*), and plantain-leaved sedge (*Carex plantaginea*). Good examples of moderate and high elevation basic mesic forests have a low incidence of white pine (*Pinus strobus*), eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), rhododendron (*Rhododendron* spp.), and Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*). An oak-dominanted variant of moderate to high elevation basic mesic forest occurs over limestone on upper to mid slopes of the Interior Plateau of Tennessee, the Cumberlands of Alabama, and the Ridge and Valley of Georgia. This basic mesic community is dominated or codominated by shumard oak (*Quercus shumardii*) or chinquapin oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*), in combination with various species of oaks and hickories and either sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), chalk maple (*Acer leucoderme*), or southern sugar maple (*Acer barbatum*). Typical calciphilic understory species also are present.

On lower elevation sites, these communities are more typically found on north slopes, where dominant and characteristic overstory species are American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) and northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), with tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), shagbark hickory (), or white ash (), with southern sugar maple, chalk maple, painted buckeye (*Aesculus sylvatica*), and pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) in the midstory and shrub layers, and understories that include faded trillium, nodding trillium (*Trillium rugelii*), black cohosh, doll's eyes, foam flower (*Tiarella cordifolia var. collina*), bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), bellworts (*Uvularia sp.*) and trout lilies (*Erythronium spp.)*. Good examples of low elevation basic mesic forests have a low incidence of sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*), and exotics such as Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) or Chinese privet (Lingustrum vulgare).

Basic mesic forest communities are found in both the Appalachian and Piedmont regions. Provisions of the Rare Community Prescription apply only to prime examples of this community that support significant populations or associations of species of viability concern. Primary management needs are protection from nontarget management disturbance. This community includes the following Associations defined by NatureServe (2001a, 2001b):

CEGL007711	Southern Appalachian Cove Forest (Rich Foothills Type),
CEGL007695	Southern Appalachian Cove Forest (Rich Montane Type),
CEGL008442	Shumard Oak-Chinquapin Oak Mesic Limestone Forest
CEGL008466	Basic Piedmont Mesic Mixed Hardwood Forest
CEGL008488	Southern Ridge and Valley Basic Mesic Hardwood Forest
CEGL004542	Piedmont Rocky Mesic Mafic Forest.

Cliffs and Rock Outcrops

Talus Slopes

This community is characterized by non-vegetated or sparsely vegetated accumulations of rock at 2,500 to 4,600 feet elevation. It is found in the Appalachian region. It is distinguished from Forested Boulderfields by the lack of trees. It is distinguished from rocky summits by its occurrence on side slopes as opposed to ridges and peaks. Primary management needs are protection from non-target management disturbance. This community includes Talus Slopes as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and all Associations within the following Ecological Group as defined by NatureServe (2001a):

430-10	Eastern Acid Talus

Forested Boulderfields

This community is characterized by rock fields, found at 3,500 to 5,300 feet elevation, that support a variable density of trees, typically dominated by yellow birch. It is distinguished from talus slopes by the presence of trees. It is found in the Appalachian region. Primary management needs are protection from nontarget management disturbance. This community includes Boulderfields as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and the following Associations as defined by NatureServe (2001a, 2001b):

CEGL004982	Southern Appalachian Hardwood Boulderfield Forest (Typic Type)
CEGL006124	Southern Appalachian Boulderfield Forest (Currant and Rockcap Fern Type)

Cliffs and Bluffs

These communities are characterized by steep, rocky, sparsely-vegetated slopes, usually above streams or rivers. Cliff communities may be dry or wet, and include communities associated with waterfalls, such as spray cliffs and rock houses. These communities are found in the Appalachian region. Primary management needs are protection from management disturbance and maintenance of hydrology near wet cliffs. This community includes Calcareous Cliffs, Mafic Cliffs, Sandstone Cliffs, and Spray Cliffs as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and all Associations within the following Ecological Groups as defined by NatureServe (2001a):

430-40	Eastern Dry Acid Cliffs
430-45	Eastern Moist Acid Cliffs
430-50	Eastern Dry Alkaline Cliffs
430-55	Eastern Moist Alkaline Cliffs
430-60	Appalachain Highlands Northern White-Cedar Bluffs
430-65	Appalachian Highlands Rock Houses

Rock Outcrops

These communities are characterized by significant areas of exposed, usually smooth, exfoliating granite or related rocks, with scattered vegetation mats and abundant lichens. These communities are found in both the Appalachian and Piedmont regions. Primary management needs are protection from nontarget management disturbance and recreational impacts. This community includes Granitic Dome and Granitic Flatrock as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and all Associations within the following Ecological Groups as defined by NatureServe (2001a):

435-10	Appalachian Highlands Granitic Domes
435-20	Appalachian Highlands Grantic Flatrock

Rocky Summits

This community is characterized by sparsely vegetated outcrops of fractured, irregular rock found above 4,000 feet elevation on peaks, ridges, and upper slopes. It is distinguished from rock outcrop communities by its fractured, irregular rock surface, and from talus slopes and cliff communities by its topographic position on or near summits. It differs from forested boulderfields in its general lack of forest cover. This community is found in the Appalachian region. Primary management needs are protection from recreational impacts. This community includes High Elevation Rocky Summits as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and all Associations within the following Ecological Group as defined by NatureServe (2001a):

436-30	Appalachian Highlands Rocky Summits

Other Communities

Glades, Barrens, and Associated Woodlands

These communities are characterized by thin soils and exposed parent material that result in localized complexes of bare soil and rock, herbaceous and/or shrubby vegetation, and thin, often stunted woods. During wet periods they may include scattered shallow pools or areas of seepage. They vary widely in species composition depending on the type of underlying parent material. They differ from rock outcrop communities by exhibiting some level of soil and vegetation over the majority of the site. Field delineations should include the entire complex of characteristic vegetation composition and structure. These communities may be found in both Appalachian and Piedmont regions. Primary management needs are protection from recreational impacts and non-target management disturbance. Periodic vegetation management, especially prescribed fire, may be necessary to maintain or restore desired herbaceous and/or shrubby composition. These communities include Calcareous Woodlands and Glades, Mafic Woodlands and Glades, Serpentine Woodlands and Glades, and Shale Barrens as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and the rare Associations within the following Ecological Groups as defined by NatureServe (2001a):

401-17	Appalachian Highlands Calcareous/Circumneutral Dry-Mesic Hardwood Forests and Woodlands
440-05	Appalachian Highlands Carbonate Glades and Barrens
440-10	Interior Highlands Carbonate Glades and Barrens
440-25	Appalachian Sandstone Glades and Barrens
440-40	Appalachian Shale Glades and Barrens
440-65	Appalachian Serpentine Woodlands
440-80	Appalachian Mafic Igneous/Metamorphic Glades and Barrens

Balds

These communities are of two types: grassy balds and shrub (or heath) balds. Grassy balds are characterized by extensive areas dominated by herbaceous vegetation at high elevations (generally above 5,000 feet). They generally are found on ridgetops, domes, and gentle slopes. Shrub balds are typically found on steep exposed slopes and ridges at elevations ranging from 2,000 to 6,500 feet, and are characterized by dominance of ericaceous shrubs. These communities are found in the Appalachian region. Primary management needs are protection from recreational impacts and maintenance of desired vegetation using a variety of methods. This community includes Grassy Balds and Heath Balds as defined in the Southern Appalachian Assessment (SAMAB 1996), and all Associations within the following Ecological Groups as defined by NatureServe (2001a):

436-10	Appalachian Highlands Grassy Balds
436-20	Appalachian Highlands Shrub Balds

Canebrakes

This community is characterized by almost monotypic stands of giant or switch cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*), usually with no or low densities of overstory tree canopy. It is typically found in bottomlands or stream terraces. Although cane is found commonly as an understory component on these sites, provisions of the Rare Community Prescription apply only to larger patches (generally greater than 0.25 acres) exhibiting high densities that result in nearly monotypic conditions, or to areas selected for restoration of such conditions. This community is found in the Appalachian, Piedmont, and Coastal Plain regions. Primary management needs are restoration and maintenance through overstory reduction and periodic prescribed fire. Although several Associations described by NatureServe (2001a, 2001b) include cane as a major component, this community most closely corresponds to:

CEGL003836	Floodplain Canebrake

Caves and Mines

This community is characterized by natural and human-made openings in the ground that extend beyond the zone of light, creating sites buffered in relation to the outside environment. Karst and sinkhole features that lead to such subterranean environments are included. Provisions of the Rare Community Prescription apply only to those sites supporting cave-associated species. This community is found in the Appalachian region. Primary management needs are protection from non-target management disturbance and recreational impacts, and maintaining quality of water flowing into underground streams.

OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS THAT APPLY GENERALLY TO RARE COMMUNITIES

Note: Refer also to objectives and standards in the Rare Communities section of chapter 2, Forestwide Direction

9.F OBJECTIVES

OBJ-9.F-01 Based on periodic monitoring of known rare community sites, identify management activities needed to maintain or restore characteristic structure, composition, and function of these communities, and implement an annual program of work designed to meet these needs.

OBJ-9.F-02 Create and maintain a geo-referenced rare communities database within seven years of plan implementation.

STANDARDS

9.F-001 Rare communities are protected from any detrimental effects caused by management actions or inaction. Site-specific analysis of proposed manage-ment actions will identify any protective measures needed in addition to Forest Plan standards, including the width of protective buffers where needed. Management activities occur within rare communities only where maintenance or restoration of rare community composition, structure, or function is expected.

9.F-002 Where recreational uses and/or sites are negatively affecting rare communities, they are modified to eliminate negative effects. New recreational developments are designed to avoid adverse effects to rare communities.

9.F-003 Do not develop new horse trails. Existing horse use will be phased out.

9.F-004 Do not develop new bike trails. Existing bike use will be phased out.

9.F-005 Nonnative invasive species are not intentionally introduced in or near rare communities, nor will management actions facilitate their inadvertent introduction.

9.F-006 Written permission from the District Ranger is required for collection of flora or fauna from rare communities and is not issued except for approved scientific purposes.

9.F-007 Except for approved studies or needed community maintenance, removal of vegetative material in rare communities is prohibited. Where needed to ensure public or employee safety, snags may be felled, but will be retained within the community as downed wood.

9.F-008 Rare communities restored to ecologically appropriate locations will be identified in planning data for allocation to, and management under, this prescription.

9.F-009 Use the minimum amount of ground, vegetation, or stream disturbance that is effective to achieve fire management objectives.

9.F-010 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production, not appropriate; however, sales may be used to further the rare community and associated terrestrial habitat goals and objectives.

9.F-011 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas

Community-Specific Objectives and Standards for Rare Communities

Wetland Communities

As wetlands, these rare communities will fall within riparian corridors. Prescription 9.F standards would be applied in addition to riparian corridor provisions.

Standards

9.F-012 Management actions that may negatively alter the hydrologic conditions of wetland rare communities are prohibited. Such actions may include livestock grazing and construction of roads, plowed or bladed firelines, and impoundments in or near these communities. Exceptions may be made for actions designed to control impacts caused by beavers, or where needed to control fires to provide for public and employee safety and to protect private land resources.

9.F-013 Introducing fish into wetland rare communities is prohibited.

9.F-014 Beaver ponds and associated wetlands are normally protected as rare communities; however, beaver populations and dams may be managed to prevent negative effects to public safety, facilities, private land resources, and other rare communities. Where beaver wetlands and other rare communities are in conflict, decisions are based on the relative rarity of the communities and associated species involved, with the rarest elements receiving priority.

Barrens, Glades, and Associated Woodlands

Barrens and glades will usually be found in relatively small discrete patches, but may be found within woodland complexes, which, if restored, may cover larger portions of the landscape. Definitions of these rare communities should be written to include only the small discrete patches. Recommendations for restoration of woodland habitats across the landscape are given under the section on major forest community types. Some maintenance and restoration activities (primarily fire) will likely be needed in these communities to limit encroachment of woody vegetation. General description of these

activities will be included in rare community definitions. Otherwise, generic rare community direction is sufficient to provide for these communities.

Table Mountain Pine Forests

This rare community will often be found within a complex of table mountain, pitch, and shortleaf pine forests. The definition of this rare community will recognize only those patches dominated by table mountain pine.

Objectives

OBJ-9.F-03 To restore table mountain pine forests on the Chattahoochee, reestablish these forest types on sites where they once likely occurred on 2,100 acres within the first 10 years of plan implementation.

OBJ-9.F-04 To maintain table mountain pine forests on the Chattahoochee in desired conditions:

- Thin over-story trees on an average of 100 acres per year of these forest types.
- Reduce hardwood mid-story on an average of 100 acres per year of these forest types.
- Prescribed burn an average of 200 acres of this type each year over the first ten years of plan implementation.

Standard

9.F-015 Table mountain pine will not be cut or treated during vegetation management activities in order to maintain future restoration opportunities. Exceptions may be made where needed to provide for public safety, protection of private resources, insect and disease control, or research.

Basic Mesic Forests

This rare community occurs in “rich” coves within mixed mesophytic forests.

Standard

9.F-016 Basic mesic forests are excluded from prescribed burning blocks where this can be accomplished without large increases in fireline construction. When necessary to include mesic deciduous forests within burning blocks, direct firing will not be done within these communities unless necessary to secure control lines. In these cases, only low intensity fires are allowed.

Rock Outcrops and Cliffs

Cliff communities support several important rare species including some Federally-listed bats.

Standard

9.F-017 Mature forest cover is maintained within 100 feet slope distance from the top of cliffs and 200 feet slope distance from the base of cliffs to provide habitat for cliff-associated species. Within this zone, activities are limited to those needed to ensure public safety or to maintain or improve habitat for federally-listed species or other species whose viability is at risk

Balds

Balds will often require active management to maintain or restore, but methods may vary widely.

9.F-018 In the rare community 'high-elevation bald', firelines are plowed only when needed and are located at least 30 feet outside bald perimeters. Scarifying, ripping, raking, and disking tools are not used except to restore balds through seedbed preparation.

Canebrakes

Canebrakes are important habitats for a number of species, and have declined in extent and quality greatly within historical times. Canebrake restoration efforts will occur on sites currently supporting cane. Management actions will be designed to increase the vigor, density, and area of existing patches of cane. Actions used to restore canebrakes will include prescribed burning on a 7 to 10 year return cycle, control of competing vegetation, and overstory reduction or removal. Suitable sites for canebrake restoration will almost always fall within riparian areas. Canebake restoration represents active management for riparian dependent resources. It is an appropriate action within riparian areas where compatible with other local riparian goals.

Objectives

OBJ-9.F-05 Restore 200 acres of canebrake communities over the first ten years of plan implementation as follows:

- 50 acres on the Chattahoochee, and
- 150 acres on the Oconee.

OBJ-9.F-06 To maintain and restore canebrakes, prescribe burn an annual average of 5 acres on the Chattahoochee and 15 acres on the Oconee of this type over the first ten years of plan implementation.

Standard

9.F-019 Existing canebrakes and areas selected for canebrake restoration are excluded from livestock grazing.

Caves and Mines

Definitions of this rare community will include mines that serve as habitat for cave-dependent species. See also species-specific recommendations for bats.

Objective

OBJ-9.F-07 Within one year of discovery develop site-specific management plans for each significant cave to meet the intent of the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act.

Standards

9.F-020 As soon as possible following discovery, accessible caves and mines are surveyed to determine use by bats.

9.F-021 For all caves and mines suitable for supporting cave-dependent species, a minimum buffer of 200 feet is maintained around portals, and any associated sinkholes and cave collapse areas. Prohibited activities within this buffer include use of wheeled or tractor vehicles (except on existing roads or as needed for cave protection and maintenance activities), mechanical site preparation, vegetation cutting, recreation

9.F RARE COMMUNITIES

site construction, tractor-constructed firelines, livestock grazing, herbicide application, and construction of new roads (including temporary roads), skid trails, and log landings. Wider buffers are identified through site-specific analysis when necessary to protect cave and mines from subterranean and surface impacts, such as recreational disturbance, sedimentation and other adverse effects to water quality, and changes in air temperature and flow.

9.F-022 Use of caves for disposal sites or alteration of cave entrances is prohibited, except for construction of appropriate cave gates or closures. Where previously-modified entrances are causing adverse impacts to cave fauna, entrances are restored to eliminate adverse effects.

9.H MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE, AND RESTORATION OF PLANT ASSOCIATIONS TO THEIR ECOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

EMPHASIS

The purpose of this prescription is the restoration of historical plant associations and their ecological dynamics to ecologically appropriate locations. Focus is on: (1) communities in decline, (2) communities converted from historic composition by land uses, (3) communities on ecologically appropriate sites but unable to maintain themselves, and (4) communities infrequent on national forest but not regionally rare. Suitable-to-optimal habitats to support populations of the plant and animal species associated with these communities will also be maintained.

DESIRED CONDITION

These areas will be characterized by a predominance of mid- and late-successional forests. Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, patches of early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain large blocks of late-successional forest. The distribution of the different forest communities and their structure will depend on the landtype association(s) in which this prescription is applied and the ecological dynamics of the community. Restoration needs will be determined based on credible sources, including historic vegetation records, Kuchler's potential natural vegetation, ecological reference areas, and professional expertise. Restoration will be evaluated at a landscape scale of the entire landtype association, not stand composition. Plant associations that are present will continue to occur during this planning period although a reduction will occur for some associations (e.g., white pine, loblolly pine, and Virginia pine). Restored communities are characterized in part by the ability to naturally maintain themselves.

These areas will be characterized by 60 to 80 percent or more of the forest cover being mid and late-successional forests. A relatively low percentage of acreage is old enough for potential old growth, and 4 to 10 percent of the area of each aggregated or contiguous block of the forested land in this management prescription will be in early-successional forest conditions. Medium and large-scale natural catastrophe will episodically create localized openings at smaller scales of from 5 to 1,000 acres, but the severity of effect will be moderated in comparison to areas with a lower management intensity. The range of canopy breaks includes gaps created by individual tree mortality, occasional insect or disease-killed groups up to several acres, infrequent restorative harvest patches of approximately 40 acres, wildlife openings, and rare large contiguous areas of several hundred acres caused by storms or wildfire. This will be accomplished through various silvicultural activities that include but would not be limited to: prescribed burning; mechanical and chemical vegetation control; and even-aged, two-aged, and uneven-aged silvicultural methods.

The landscape character is natural-appearing. Management changes are the primary agents of strong change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Evidence of fire effects is a common landscape feature, including reduced stem densities, increased herbaceous ground cover, charring,, snags, and a reduced number of canopy layers. Natural appearing managed change occurs, but affects a limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low- to-

9.H MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE, AND RESTORATION OF PLANT ASSOCIATIONS

moderate contrast and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur with low to high short-term and moderate to high long-term landscape character changes.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present and maintained. Expansion of existing openings and/or creation of new openings may occur. Non-invasive nonnatives are sometimes used when establishing food plants for wildlife, but native species are used where feasible and cost effective. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Recreation experience will be provided in a landscape character that will be natural appearing. This area will provide a variety of motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities. Human activities will be evident in some places. Visitors will likely see other people in the parts of this area with motorized access. The trail and access emphasis will depend on the specific conditions of each area.Outdoor skills are of moderate importance to visitors in this area. Some of the areas will provide opportunities for interpretation and conservation education. Restoration of plant communities takes precedence over recreation, and recreation uses may be redirected or suspended in some locations due to restoration activities.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Visitor expectations and satisfaction are monitored. Search and rescue is not readily available. When needed, motorized operations are usually constrained by requirements for special case-by-case permissions. Environmental effects of recovery operations are planned to be minimal and promptly rehabilitated.

Facilities are primarily non-structural; for example, roads, trails, tables, tent pads, etc. Structures are uncommon. Access may be possible by passenger car in good weather, but roads are not designed or maintained for them. Roads are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Total system road density remains near the average density of Forest Service jurisdiction roads in the ecological section. However, the proportion of open road may be locally less. In these areas existing facilities are maintained above a resource protection level but without a strong emphasis on visitor expectations. Capacity of facilities is typically low and they are rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities.

Management is constrained to remain compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. The recreation use emphasis is on dispersed activities such as hunting, fishing, or hiking, but localized and limited development facilitates those uses.

There will be good-to-optimal habitat conditions for species favoring mid- to late-successional forested conditions. Management and/or protection of rare communities and species associates will be provided, along with management and/or protection measures for population occurrences of threatened, endangered, sensitive, and locally rare species. Habitat for a broad mix of species will also be provided. Early-successional forest patches vary in size, but many are larger than 20 acres to provide optimal conditions for dependent species.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are

protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-9.H-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 50 percent of forested acres in mid- to late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 20 percent of forested acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and 4 to 10 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

9.H-001 New utility corridor or communication sites may be authorized subject to applicable forestwide and management prescription standards.

Minerals and Geology

9.H-002 Using stipulations or lease terms for environmental protection, Federal mineral leases would be allowed.

9.H-003 Mineral material authorizations would be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

9.H-004 Insect and disease outbreaks shall be controlled to help move the area toward the desired conditions, where PETS or locally rare species and their habitats may be adversely impacted or to prevent damage to resources on adjacent lands.

9.H-005 Stands may be actively managed to reduce the risk of damage from native and nonnative pests. In addition, biological control methods are used when available and effective.

9.H-006 Native vegetation occurring on very limited areas and thus at risk of complete loss to pest outbreak may receive pre-conditioning treatments to ensure its natural regeneration if damaged.

9.H-007 Biological controls may be considered for established nonnative pests through the release of natural enemies.

9.H-008 Eradication may be used for nonnative pests.

9.H-009 Hazard trees could be felled in areas occupied by humans (i.e., dispersed sites and roads). Actions need to be consistent with Forest Service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and SPB EIS.

Fire Management

9.H-010 Natural ignitions can be managed for resource benefits if planned for in an approved Fire Use Implementation Plan.

Recreation

9.H-011 Areas will be managed to meet or exceed ROS settings RN1, RN2, SPM, and SPNM.

9.H-012 OHVs would be allowed on designated trails. New OHV systems may be allowed as provided for in Forest-wide direction.

Scenery

9.H-013 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	M	L	L	L	L	L

Timber Management

9.H-014 These lands are classified under NFMA as suitable for timber production.

Successional Stage Management

9.H-015 Creation of early-successional habitat is limited to 10 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

9.H-016 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, early-successional forest created by natural processes or management actions will be clustered on the landscape to maintain blocks of late-successional forest and interaction among early-successional wildlife species.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Protection

9.H-017 On that portion of the Oconee National Forest south of Interstate 20, the requirements of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service January 2003 RCW Recovery Plan and its amendments must be complied with in each management prescription.

11 RIPARIAN CORRIDORS

EMPHASIS

Riparian Corridors will be managed to retain, restore and/or enhance the inherent ecological processes and functions of the associated aquatic, riparian, and upland components within the corridor.

DESIRED CONDITIONS FOR THE RIPARIAN CORRIDOR

Riparian corridors reflect the physical structure, biological components, and ecological processes that sustain aquatic, riparian, and associated upland functions and values. The preferred management for riparian corridors is one that maintains, or moves toward, the restoration of natural processes that regulate the environmental and ecological components of riparian areas. However, due to the high value that these areas have for many uses, evidence of human activity, such as developed recreation areas, roads and trails, dams and reservoirs may be present.

Primarily, natural processes (floods, erosion, seasonal fluctuations, etc.) will modify most of the areas within the riparian corridor. However, management activities may be used to provide terrestrial or aquatic habitat improvement, favor recovery of native vegetation, control insect infestation and disease, comply with legal requirements (e.g. Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act), provide for public safety, and meet other riparian functions and values.

Riparian corridors occur along all defined perennial and intermittent stream channels that show signs of scour and around natural ponds, lakeshores, wetlands, springs and seeps. Portions of the corridor may extend into upland areas, especially within steep-sided stream valleys and headwater reaches.

The soils of riparian corridors have an organic layer (including litter, duff, and/or humus) of sufficient depth and composition to maintain the natural infiltration capacity, moisture regime, and productivity of the soil (recognizing that floods may periodically sweep some areas within the floodplain of soil and vegetation). Exposed mineral soil and soil compaction from human activity may be present but are dispersed and do not impair the productivity and fertility of the soil. Any human-caused disturbances or modifications that cause environmental degradation through concentrated runoff, soil erosion, or sediment transport to the channel or water body are promptly rehabilitated or mitigated to reduce or eliminate impacts.

Trees within the corridors are managed to provide sufficient amounts and sizes of woody debris to maintain habitat complexity and diversity for aquatic and riparian-associated wildlife species. Recruitment of woody debris typically occur naturally; however, woody debris may be purposefully introduced to enhance aquatic and terrestrial habitat. Both in-stream and terrestrial woody debris are regarded as essential, and generally left undisturbed.

The riparian corridor functions as a travelway for aquatic and terrestrial organisms. The corridor serves as a connector of habitats and populations. Stream structures -- such as bridges, culverts, and aquatic habitat improvement structures -- may be evident in some

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streams and water bodies. With the exception of some dams, most structures do not decrease in-stream connectivity.

Suitable habitat is provided in riparian areas, and where applicable in the associated uplands, for riparian-associated flora and fauna; especially threatened, endangered, sensitive (TES) and locally rare species. The corridor widths will occasionally include upland ecosystems, wider than the area showing riparian vegetation. Vegetation (dead and alive) reflects the potential natural diversity of plant communities with appropriate horizontal and vertical structure needed to provide the shade, food, shelter, and microclimate characteristics for aquatic and terrestrial species. Rehabilitation of past and future impacts (both natural and human-caused) may be necessary to protect resource values and facilitate recovery of riparian structure and functions.

Vegetative communities within the riparian corridor are diverse and productive, providing for a rich variety of organisms and habitat types. The vegetative community within the riparian corridor is predominately forested; however, some natural non-forested habitats such as wet meadows, grasses or shrub dominated plant communities may occur. The desired vegetative condition of nonforested communities is determined by site-specific analysis.

The forest contains multiple canopy layers, which provide a variety of habitat niches, as well as thermal and protective cover for wildlife. Snags used by birds, bats, and small animals are abundant. Dying and down trees are common, often in natural patches. Wet meadows, nonforest communities, and open forest canopies, created by flooding, wind damage, wildland fire, insects infestation, disease, restoration, and vegetation management may be seen. Suitable habitat is provided in riparian areas, and where applicable in the associated uplands, for riparian-associated flora and fauna; including migratory species. High canopy species such as red-eyed vireo and yellow-throated warbler as well as species that use mid-story and well developed shrub layers in understory (thrushes, ovenbird, etc.) would also be expected in high densities. Species associated with habitat conditions found in riparian and wetland habitats, i.e. Acadian flycatcher, parula, Louisiana waterthrush, prothonotary warbler, wood duck, egrets and great blue heron could potentially be found in high densities in these areas.

Within the riparian corridor vegetation management activities, including prescribed fire, may take place to: maintain, restore, and/or enhance the diversity and complexity of native vegetation; rehabilitate both natural and human-caused disturbances, and provide habitat improvements for TES or riparian-associated wildlife species (including migratory birds), provide for visitor safety, or to accommodate appropriate recreational uses.

Silvicultural treatments, including timber and vegetation removal, may occur to restore and/or enhance riparian resources such as water, wildlife and native communities. Prescribed fire can be used within the corridor to create or maintain the composition and vitality of fire-dependent vegetative communities, such as canebrakes. Low intensity fire may occur when streams are used as natural firebreaks in association with landscape level burning.

The landscape character is naturally “evolving” or appearing, but occasional instances of a rural landscape character may occur with recreation developments, such as a swim beach at a campground. Livestock grazing may occur, but it is managed to minimize impacts on stream banks, water quality, and other riparian resources.

The recreational opportunities are in roaded natural and rural settings. Both dispersed and developed recreation opportunities may be present within these corridors. Although recreational areas and facilities may create long-term impacts on riparian corridors, allowances are made in this prescription since a majority of recreation within the national forests occurs in or near water bodies. Hiking, dispersed camping, hunting, and fishing

are typical activities available within the corridor. Visitors may encounter developed camping areas, boat launches and fishing piers. Current recreation areas and facilities are maintained or upgraded to minimize impacts on stream banks, shorelines, and water quality. Environmental education and interpretation about the aquatic component and riparian corridor may be provided to increase awareness of the value of riparian dependent resources.

Density of open roads and/or motorized trails may decrease over time as roads and/or trails that are unneeded or are causing undesirable resource impacts are closed.

DESIRED CONDITIONS FOR AQUATIC SYSTEMS WITHIN THE RIPARIAN CORRIDOR

Streams are in dynamic equilibrium; that is, stream systems normally function within natural ranges of flow, sediment movement, temperature, and other variables. The geomorphic condition of some channels may reflect the process of long-term adjustment from historic watershed disturbances (e.g., past intensive farming practices within the Piedmont). The combination of geomorphic and hydrologic processes creates a diverse physical environment, which, in turn, fosters biological diversity. The physical integrity of aquatic systems, stream banks and substrate, including shorelines and other components of habitat, is intact and stable. Where channel shape is modified (e.g., road crossing), the modification preserves channel stability and function.

The natural range of in-stream flows is maintained to support channel function, aquatic biota and wildlife habitat, floodplain function, and aesthetic values. Water uses and other modifications of flow regimes are evaluated in accordance with the national Forest Service in-stream flow strategy and site-specific analysis.

Water quality remains within a range that ensures survival, growth, reproduction, and migration of aquatic and riparian-associated wildlife species; and contributes to the biological, physical, and chemical integrity of aquatic ecosystems. Water quality meets or exceeds State and Federal standards. Water quality (e.g., water temperatures, reducing turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and pH) will be improved where necessary to benefit critical aquatic communities.

Floodplains properly function as detention/retention storage areas for floodwaters, sources of organic matter to the water column, and habitat for aquatic and riparian-associated species. Modification of the floodplain is infrequent but may be undertaken to protect human life and property or to meet other appropriate management goals (e.g., restoration). There may be evidence of some roads, trails, and recreation developments. Some wetland habitats may show signs of restoration.

The biological integrity of aquatic communities is maintained, restored, or enhanced. Aquatic species distributions are maintained or are expanded into previously occupied habitat. The amount, distribution, and characteristics of aquatic habitats for all life stages are present to maintain populations of indigenous and desired nonnative species. Habitat conditions contribute to the recovery of species under the Endangered Species Act. Species composition, distribution, and relative abundance of organisms in managed habitats is comparable to that of natural habitats of the same region or reference stream. Some streams, however, may be stocked with nonnative fish in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division.

11
RIPARIAN
CORRIDORS

Determination of Riparian Corridors

The Riparian Corridor Prescription Area encompasses riparian areas, as well as adjacent associated upland components. A riparian area is functionally defined as a three-dimensional ecotone of interaction that includes both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. They extend down into the groundwater, up above the canopy, outward across the floodplain, up the near-slopes that drain into the water, laterally into the terrestrial ecosystem, and along the watercourse at a variable width (Ilhardt et al. 2000). A riparian corridor, on the other hand, is a management prescription designed to include much of the riparian area. Within the riparian corridor management prescription area, management practices are specified to maintain riparian functions and values. As a management prescription area, this includes corridors along all defined perennial and intermittent stream channels that show signs of scour, and around natural ponds, lakeshores, wetlands, springs, and seeps.

An operational definition of a riparian area based on soils, vegetation and hydrologic characteristics can be found in Forest Plan Appendix C, along with a graphical representation of a Riparian Corridor.

Due to their spatial extent, riparian corridors are not identified on the Forest Plan map of prescription allocations. Estimated acreages of the Riparian Corridor allocations are based on the widths described in Tables 3-11 through 3-14. For project planning and implementation, the following process will be used to determine the extent of site-specific riparian corridors.

Riparian corridor widths are designed to encompass the riparian area defined on the basis of soils, vegetation and hydrology as described in Appendix C, and the ecological functions and values associated with the riparian area. The widths in Tables 3-11 through 3-14 shall be used to define the riparian corridor if site-specific delineation is not determined as described below.

If a site-specific field investigation determines the need to vary the widths in Tables 3-11 through 3-14, that width shall become the project level riparian corridor. This corridor shall be determined by an interdisciplinary analysis using site-specific information to ensure that riparian values and functions are maintained.

The slope-dependent Riparian Corridor widths are measured in on-the-ground surface feet perpendicular from the edge of the channel or bank (stream, water body, etc.) and extend out from each side of a stream. For ponds, lakes, sloughs, and wetlands (including seeps or springs associated with wetlands) the measurement would start at the ordinary high water mark and go around the perimeter. For braided streams, the outermost braid will be used as the water's edge. An interrupted stream (a watercourse that goes underground and then reappears) will be treated as if the stream were above ground. (An acceptable level of error for on-the-ground measurements of these widths is $\pm$ 10%.)

Portions of the corridor may extend into upland areas, outside the area with riparian vegetation. This would most likely occur in steep-sided stream valleys and headwater reaches. The riparian corridor is also delineated around human-created reservoirs, wildlife ponds, wetlands, and waterholes connected to or associated with natural water features. In addition, those areas not associated with natural water features, but supporting riparian-associated flora or fauna, will have a riparian corridor designation. The Riparian Corridor management prescription direction does not apply to constructed ponds developed for recreation uses; or to human-made ditches, gullies, or other features that are maintained or in the process of restoration. For these areas, site-specific analysis will determine the appropriate protective measures. (See also the forestwide standards in Chapter 2.)

Riparian Corridors for the Chattahoochee National Forest

The following widths are used to identify and map riparian corridors for all activities and projects on the Chattahoochee National Forest. Most of the streams on the Chattahoochee are designated as cool or cold water, and are further identified as trout watersheds by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. These streams require protection of streams and associated riparian areas to provide optimum cool and cold water habitat.

Widths are slope distances, measured from the stream bank edge on each side of the stream. It is recognized that the actual riparian ecosystem extent may vary with the site-specific conditions and the riparian boundary may be expanded through field investigation. Individual tables are displayed for perennial streams and intermittent streams to emphasize the need for protection on these different stream types on the Chattahoochee National Forest.

Table 3- 11. Riparian Corridor Widths For Perennial Streams, Lakes, Ponds, Or Wetlands *(In Feet, Measured As Described Above)*

Physiographic Area	Slope Class		
	0-10%	11-45%	45% +
Blue Ridge Mtns, Ridge & Valley, Upper Piedmont	100	125	150

Table 3- 12. Riparian Corridor Widths For Intermittent Streams (In Feet,Measured as Described Above)

Physiographic Area	Slope Class		
	0-10%	11-45%	45% +
Blue Ridge Mtns, Ridge & Valley, Upper Piedmont	100	125	150

Riparian Corridors for the Oconee National Forest

The following widths are used for delineating riparian corridors for all activities on the Oconee National Forest. Streams on the Oconee are classified as warm water. Widths are slope distances, measured from the stream bank edge on each side of the stream. It is recognized that the actual riparian ecosystem extent may vary with the site-specific conditions and the riparian boundary may be expanded through field investigation.

Table 3- 13. Riparian Corridor Widths For Perennial Streams, Lakes, Ponds, Or Wetlands *(In Feet, Measured As Described Above)*

Physiographic Area	Slope Class		
	0-30%	31-45%	45% +
Lower Piedmont	100	125	150

Table 3- 14. Riparian Corridor Widths For Intermittent Streams (In Feet, Measured as Described Above)

Physiographic Area	Slope Class		
	0-30%	31-45%	45% +
Lower Piedmont	50	75	100

Relationship with Ephemeral Streams

Ephemeral streams do not have riparian areas, but are hydrologically connected to perennial and intermittent streams downstream. They flow only in direct response to precipitation, lack defined channels and are above the water table at all times. Some ephemeral streams exhibit evidence of scouring from storm events.

Standards for the Ephemeral Stream Zone are found in chapter 2, Forestwide Direction, of this Forest Plan. The primary purpose of this zone is to maintain the ability of the land areas to filter sediment from upslope disturbances while achieving the goals of the adjacent management prescription area. In addition, the emphasis along ephemeral streams is to maintain stream stability and sediment controls by minimizing vehicle entry into the stream bottom and maintaining, restoring, or enhancing large woody debris. The management direction in this zone reflects the adjacent management prescription and may be modified as a result of watershed analysis.

The ephemeral stream zone is identified as 25 feet on each side of an ephemeral with evidence of scouring. Scouring is described as movement of the duff or litter material on the surface due to water movement, exposing the soil below.

Relationship with Other Management Prescriptions

The Riparian Corridor management prescription is 'embedded' within each of the other management prescriptions; it does not stand alone. The Riparian Corridor prescription must be identified and considered whenever any of the other management prescriptions are to be implemented at the project/site specific level.

The Riparian Corridor overlaps with other management prescription allocations. In order to establish precedence, the following rules apply:

1. Where the Riparian Corridor management prescription area overlaps with lands that have been allocated to the following management prescriptions, the most restrictive management prescription direction will apply:

    a. 1A or 1B - Wilderness and Recommended Wilderness areas
    b. 2A or 2B - Rivers Designated in or Recommended for the Wild and Scenic System
    c. 3A - National Scenic Areas
    d. 4D and 4F - Special Areas
    e. 4H - Forest-Designated Outstandingly Remarkable Streams
    f. 9F - Rare Communities

2. For lands allocated to any of the other management prescriptions, where the riparian corridor overlaps with these allocations, the direction in the Riparian Corridor Management Prescription will take precedence.

RIPARIAN CORRIDOR STANDARDS

General Standards

Emphasis of activities or treatments in the Riparian Corridor: Activities and management treatments within the Riparian Corridor, except for 'pass through' situations, are for the benefit of riparian-associated species. These activities or treatments will be managed to retain, restore and/or enhance the inherent ecological processes and functions of the associated aquatic, riparian, and upland components within the corridor.

Due to the complexity of the delineation and allocations of the Riparian Corridor embedded within other management prescriptions, additional standards are found in the forestwide standards in chapter 2. When designing and implementing projects one needs to reference all applicable management direction to ensure compliance. As an example, standards for trail management in riparian corridors are also found in the forestwide standards for trails.

Desired Facilities and Human Activities: Management may take place within the Riparian Corridor to:

a) Provide terrestrial or aquatic habitat improvement
b) Favor recovery of native vegetation
c) Sustain or enhance aquatic or riparian-associated species
d) Control insect or disease infestation
e) Comply with legal requirements
f) Provide for public safety
g) Support other riparian functions and values

11-001 **Major Actions/Activities within the Riparian Corridor:**

Major human actions or activities that create long-term impacts or permanent changes to water drainage, soil exposure and productivity, create impervious surfaces, or permanent removal of vegetation cover are prohibited within the Riparian Corridor. Examples of major actions are those requiring extensive changes to the landscape and those with the potential to create long-term impacts.

Examples of major actions and activities include road and trail travelways (except for designated crossings), recreation sites and facilities, log landings, permanent wildlife openings, and range allotments.

Activities or treatments that need to pass through or cross Riparian Corridors will be permitted with mitigation and constraints. Examples include crossings of streams by roads and trails.

Existing activities, such as road and trail stream crossings, recreation sites, and wildlife openings, will be permitted within the riparian corridor, provided the sites are not causing impacts to water quality, soil productivity, aquatic or riparian habitats, and they can be properly maintained to mitigate adverse impacts.

11-002 **Minor Actions/Activities within the Riparian Corridor**

Minor human actions or activities that create short-term impacts or temporary changes to water drainage, soil exposure and productivity, or vegetation cover are permitted within the Riparian Corridor with appropriate mitigation and monitoring of impacts. Examples of minor actions are those of short duration, limited extent, and temporary changes in drainage or soil exposure.

Examples of minor activities include silvicultural activities needed to meet resource objectives of riparian-associated species such as timber removal, site preparation, reforestation, and prescribed burning), bank stabilization, temporary road construction and stream crossings associated with these activities.

Silvicultural activities are those that have the purpose, or include the intention to, establish or perpetuate a forest cover. Examples of silvicultural activities include timber removal, site preparation, reforestation, prescribed burning, road construction and stream crossings associated with these activities.

11-003 For all projects, additional protection, such as wider riparian corridor distances, higher residual canopy cover, restrictions on activities, etc. will be identified through site specific inventories and surveys, site-specific biological evaluations, and site-specific mitigations identified in project NEPA documents.

11-004 Equipment use is allowed within the Riparian Corridor, stream channel, ponds, or wetlands to:

- Cross at designated points,
- Improve or enhance aquatic or wetland habitat,
- Construct log stream structures, deepen pools, place boulder habitat, stabilize the channel and/or the stream banks,
- Construct or maintain recreation facilities,
- Construct or maintain stream crossings.
- Implement silvicultural practices in compliance with Georgia Best Management Practices for Forestry
- Cross for fireline construction, with applicable restrictions (see Fire Management).
- Emergency administrative activities.

Fish and Wildlife Management

11-005 The removal of large woody debris (pieces greater than four feet long and four inches in diameter on the small end) is allowed only if the debris poses a risk to water quality, degrades habitat for riparian-dependent species, or when it poses a threat to private property or Forest Service infrastructures (i.e., bridges). The need for removal must be deter-mined on a case-by-case basis.

11-006 Existing wildlife openings are allowed within the riparian corridor. However, wildlife openings identified as causing environmental degradation through concentrated runoff, soil erosion, sediment transport to the channel or water body will be mitigated or closed and restored. New wildlife openings within the riparian corridor are only permitted where needed to provide habitat for riparian-associated species.

11-007 For projects implemented to improve aquatic habitat, streambank stabilization or water quality, natural material may be taken from within the riparian corridor.

11-008 Dredge and fill operations in juridictional waters or wetlands of the U.S. must comply with the Clean Water Act, Section 404 regulations. Appropriate Section 404 permit requirements will be met prior to project implementation.

Recreation - Trails

11-009 No new trails for off-highway vehicles, horses or bicycles or other non-pedistrian modes of movement will be constructed within the Riparian Corridor, except to approach and cross at designated crossings or where the trail location requires some encroachment (e.g., to accommodate stream crossings in steep terrain, etc.).

11-010 All trail construction, reconstruction and maintenance must be accomplished in accordance with current Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control in Georgia, applicable state or local erosion control regulations, and the current Forest Service Trail Handbook direction.

11-011 Existing OHV trails within the riparian corridor causing unacceptable resource impacts will be identified for appropriate mitigation measures (including OHV trail closure).

11-012 All new stream crossings will be constructed so that they do not adversely affect the passage of aquatic organisms, or significantly alter the natural flow regime. Exceptions may be allowed to prevent the upstream migration of undesired species.

Recreation – Developed

11-013 New recreation facilities must be developed in accordance with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management, and Executive Order 11990, Wetlands Management. Alternative locations must be considered for all new facilities. Where none exist, potential impacts must be minimized or mitigated to moderate the severity of those impacts.

Recreation - Dispersed

11-014 Camping trailers and vehicles are not allowed within 100 feet of perennial streams or lakes, except at designated areas.

11-015 Overnight tethering or corralling of horses or other livestock is not allowed within 100 feet of stream courses or lakes. Existing corral sites will be maintained to limit impacts to water quality and riparian corridors.

Scenery Management

11-016 Scenic integrity within the riparian corridor ranges from High to Moderate.

Federally-Owned Minerals

11-017 New mineral or oil and gas leases will contain a no-surface-occupancy stipulation or a controlled-surface-use stipulation for the riparian corridor.

11-018 Federal mineral material (36 CFR 228(c)) authorizations are only allowed to restore riparian areas and aquatic habitat, control erosion and sedimentation, and repair flood damage.

11-019 Recreational gold panning is only allowed where it does not adversely affect stream channel stability, substrate, aquatic species, or their habitats.

Vegetation

11-020 Lands in the riparian corridor are classified as not suitable, not appropriate for timber production under the NFMA, however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

11-021 Vegetation Management may be implemented with commercial timber sales when that is the most practical or economically efficient method to accomplish resource objectives.

11-022 Silvicultural activities conducted within the Riparian Corridor will be conducted to meet or exceed compliance with the current edition of Best Management Practices for Forestry in Georgia.

11-023 Commercial collection of botanical products will not be allowed in the riparian corridor if it would adversely affect the functions and values of the riparian ecosystem.

11-024 Tree removals may only take place if needed to enhance the recovery of the diversity and complexity of vegetation, rehabilitate both natural and human-caused disturbances, provide habitat improvements for TES or riparian-associated species, reduce fuel buildup, provide for visitor safety, or for approved facility construction/renovation.

11-025 Permits for firewood cutting within the riparian corridor will take into consideration the large woody debris requirements.

11-026 Revegetation activities will emphasize using native plants.

11-027 Channel stability of perennial and intermittent streams is protected by retaining all woody understory vegetation within at least 5 feet of the bank and by keeping slash accumulations out of the stream. Stream bank trees will not be cut unless a threat to visitor safety or part of a planned watershed improvement project.

11–028 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production, not appropriate; however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple uuse values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

Forest Health

11-029 Cut and leave will be the preferred method for control and suppression of insects and disease in the Riparian Corridor. Other control measures may be used when a condition poses a risk to stream stability, degrades water quality, adversely affects habitat for riparian-associated species, poses a threat to public safety or facilities, or when "cut and leave" is not effective.

11-030 Alternative measures for insect and disease control will be determined on the basis of risk to adjacent resources, long-term sustainability, and appropriate needs for the function and condition of the riparian area.

Fire Management

11-031 Use wildfire suppression techniques that minimize potential damage to physical resources within riparian corridors including soils, ground cover, and stream channels. Select suppression techniques to minimize the need for rehabilation within the corridor.

11-032 Except for wildfire or escaped prescribed fire, construction of firelines with heavy mechanized equipment (e.g., bulldozers) in wetlands or riparian corridors is prohibited.

11-033 Hand lines are used to create firelines near streams to minimize soil disturbance. Water diversions are used to keep sediment out of streams. Firelines are not constructed in stream channels, but streams may be used as firelines.

11-034 Accidental entry of fire suppression retardants into water bodies will be reported to respective District personnel, Forest watershed or wildlife staff, and Georgia Department of Natural Resources - Wildlife Resources Division.

11-035 If necessary to cross a stream with a fire line, crossings will be as close to right angles as possible to the stream and be stabilized and/or re-vegetated as soon after the fire is controlled as possible.

Road Stream Crossings

11-036 Where risks of resource damage are high, each road segment will be constructed and stabilized prior to starting another segment. High-risk areas include landslide prone areas, steep slopes and highly erosive soils. High-risk streams include streams containing sensitive aquatic species such as trout and mussels, or any threatened or endangered species.

11 RIPARIAN CORRIDORS

11-037 To minimize the length of streamside disturbance, ensure that approach sections are aligned with the stream channel at as near a right angle as possible. Locate riparian corridor crossings to minimize the amount of fill material needed and minimize channel impacts.

11-038 If culverts are removed, stream banks and channels must be restored to a natural size and shape. All disturbed soil will be stabilized.

11-039 All new stream crossings will be constructed so that they do not adversely impact the passage of aquatic organisms. Exceptions may be allowed in order to prevent the upstream migration of undesired species.

11-040 All new construction, reconstruction, decommissioning, or maintenance of Forest Service system roads will comply with requirements of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act when jurisdictional waters or wetlands of the United States are involved, including the fifteen (15) mandatory Best Management Practices *(40 CFR 232.22).*

Land and Special Uses

11-041 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas.

12.A REMOTE BACKCOUNTRY RECREATION - FEW OPEN ROADS

All, or portions, of the following inventoried roadless areas are allocated to MRx 12.A:

Big Mountain	Patterson Gap
Indian Grave Gap	Pink Knob
Joe Gap	Rocky Mountain
Kelly Ridge	

EMPHASIS

These lands are managed to provide users with a degree of solitude and a semi-primitive experience in large remote areas that still allow the use of limited public motorized access on existing, open motorized roads. Areas will be 2,500 acres or greater in size unless adjacent to a prescription that also provides a semi-primitive experience (1.A., 1.B., 4.A., 6.A., etc.).

DESIRED CONDITION

Active management activities such as: prescribed fire, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) operations, salvage logging, wildfire suppression, trail construction, creation of wildlife openings, forest type restorations, and habitat manipulations are allowed. Occasionally, some vegetation manipulation with commercial timber sales to open forest canopies would be used for wildlife habitat improvements, forest health considerations, or to restore native vegetative communities.

These areas provide large tracts of backcountry opportunities with a semi-primitive motorized emphasis. Existing roads do not contribute sediment to streams. Few or no interior roads occur. Those that do are well located, stable and suitable for use by the types of vehicles and during the use periods appropriate to the achievement of the emphasis for the area. Roads do not disqualify the area from roadless status under Forest Service criteria. Human activities may be evident in some places. Visitors will occasionally see other people, especially near the few open roads in these areas. A non-motorized trail system will provide the predominant means of access, and trails will be improved or constructed. Decommissioned and closed roads will be available for non-motorized uses. The landscape will appear to be primarily shaped by ecological processes and the landscape character will be natural appearing. Environmental effects of recovery operations would be minimal and promptly rehabilitated.

The primary landscape character is natural evolving with natural processes the dominant agents of strong change in visual elements of form, line, color, and texture. Natural-appearing managed change occurs but affects a very limited area either individually or cumulatively at any one time. Management changes are designed to be low-contrast with pre-treatment conditions and therefore compatible with the SIO. Active management may occur to moderate visual contrasts of natural change, but obvious evidence of human intervention in the appearance of the landscape is rare.

Visitors are informed to expect limited, rustic amenities. Acquiring current information typically requires contacting the Forest Service by phone or visiting a Forest Service office. Signs are few but adequate to guide visitors from state or county roads. Visitors are expected to be rather self-reliant and well prepared. Visitor's expectations and satisfaction will be monitored. Search and rescue is not readily available. When needed,

12.A REMOTE BACKCOUNTRY RECREATION - FEW OPEN ROADS

motorized operations are usually constrained by requirements for special case-by-case permissions.

Facilities are primarily non-structural; for example, roads, trails, tables, tent pads, etc. Structures are uncommon. Access may be possible by passenger car in good weather, but roads are not designed or maintained for them. In these areas, existing facilities are maintained above a resource protection level but without a strong emphasis on visitor expectations. Capacity of facilities is typically low and they are rustic in character. Limited new facilities are provided, and if constructed, are usually in response to the need to correct environmental problems rather than increase capacity. Type, number, location, and degree of facility development is a primary means of limiting visitor use. There is no emphasis on upgrading recreational facilities to provide more amenities.

Management is constrained to remain compatible with the existing recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) class and with the inventoried scenic class. The recreation use emphasis is on dispersed activities such as hunting, fishing, or hiking, but localized and limited development facilitates those uses.

There will be habitat conditions for species favoring mid-to-late-successional forested conditions. Habitat for a broad mix of species will also be provided.

The mix and types of forest communities will depend on the landtype association(s) in which this prescription is applied.

Existing old fields and openings for wildlife may be present, maintained, and expanded. New openings can be created. Native species are emphasized when establishing food plants for wildlife. Some openings provide permanent shrub/sapling habitats as a result of longer maintenance cycles.

Streams and water bodies are periodically inventoried and monitored on an individual stream basis to characterize conditions or trends. Streams and water bodies are protected from adverse effects. Aquatic habitat management activities are allowed to maintain, restore and enhance aquatic habitat conditions and associated communities of native, desired nonnative, and/or demand species. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Systematic landscape surveys will be conducted periodically on a sample basis for population health and trends of PETS species. Once identified, locations of proposed, endangered, and threatened species populations are geo-referenced, generally as a point, and monitored periodically, but not necessarily annually. Data collected is typically basic population-level (polygon) data. Active management to maintain habitat of known populations may occur with the written concurrence of the USFWS where a beneficial effect to the species has been established. National Forests will manage for the viability of all native and desirable nonnative species occurring on the Forest.

Inventories will be conducted to identify significant heritage resources requiring monitoring and protection. The priority of heritage resource inventory areas will focus on known heritage resources, the probability of sites containing significant heritage resources, and areas of popular use such as trails and campsites.

OBJECTIVE

OBJ-12.A-01 Manage forest successional stages to maintain a minimum of 75 percent of forested acres in mid- and late-successional forest, including old growth; a minimum of 50 percent of forest acres in late-successional forest, including old growth; and up to 4 percent per decade in early-successional forest.

STANDARDS

Lands and Special Uses

12.A-001 New utility corridors or communication sites will not be authorized within these areas.

Minerals and Geology

12.A-002 Using lease terms for environmental protection, Federal mineral leases would be allowed.

12.A-003 Mineral material authorizations would be allowed.

Vegetation and Forest Health

12.A-004 Stands may be actively managed to reduce the risks and hazards of damage from native and nonnative invasive pests, while still meeting a high level of scenic integrity.

12.A-005 Aggressive integrated pest management should be considered for infestations adjacent to trails for a distance of one and one-half times the tree height.

12.A-006 Indigenous forest pests are kept within acceptable levels through integrated pest management techniques.

12.A-007 Nonnative forest pests are minimized through use of controls, silvicultural practices, and timely salvage of damaged trees. Actions need to be consistent with Forest Service policy, Gypsy Moth EIS, and SPB EIS.

Recreation

12.A-008 Areas are managed for a semi-primitive motorized ROS setting (SPM). Semi-primitive recreation opportunities are emphasized, but a few open roads allow good access.

12.A-009 A non-motorized trail system is provided, utilizing old roads as well as new trails, where possible, to create a desired trail system.

12.A-010 Non-motorized trail systems are planned to reduce social encounters and provide opportunities for solitude.

12.A-011 Non-motorized trails are maintained at maintenance levels 1–3.

12.A-012 Existing four-wheel drive roads and trails connecting to ATV and motorcycle routes allowed on a case-by-case basis.

Scenery

12.A-013 Management activities are designed to meet or exceed the following Scenic Integrity Objectives, which vary by Inventoried Scenic Class.

Inventoried Scenic Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scenic Integrity Objectives	H	H	H	H	H	H	H

Facilities, Roads, and Access

12.A-014 Management actions will not be taken that result in any inventoried roadless area no longer meeting Forest Service roadless criteria.

12.A-015 Existing roads used for project activities, such as creating or maintaining wildlife openings or habitat restorations, are maintained at maintenance level two.

12.A-016 Roads not open for public use and not needed for management activities will be analyzed for decommissioning.

12.A-017 New temporary use roads that are needed to facilitate stewdardship activities will be allowed. These will not be open for public use and will be closed and rehabilitated when no longer needed.

12.A-018 No new motorized trails/routes.

Timber Management

12.A-019 These lands are classified under NFMA as unsuitable for timber production; not appropriate; however, salvage sales, sales necessary to protect other multiple-use values, or activities that meet other Plan goals and objectives are permitted.

Successional Stage Management

12.A-020 Creation of early-successional forest habitat is limited to 4 percent of forested acres. Existing patches of early-successional forest greater than two acres in size are included when calculating allowable levels of early-successional forest creation.

12.A-021 Where compatible with other multiple-use objectives, patches of early-successional forest created by management actions may be clustered or scattered on the landscape depending on ecological objectives

MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION MAPS

On the following pages simple, small scale, monochrome maps of each prescription appearing in this plan are shown. These maps, along with introductory text in each management prescription, are to provide a more complete frame of reference. The individual maps give a sense of proportion and distribution of individual prescriptions. Considered as a set, the maps indicate the range of management being used. They provide an overview of relative emphasis and desired conditions, and illustrate key similarities or differences between the major ecological sub-areas of the forest. Hopefully also by reference to a Forest administrative map or other similarly detailed map, localized areas of particular interest can be at least related to the appropriate prescription.