

CHAPTER 3 – AREA DIRECTION

3.0 Area Direction

This chapter contains management direction for geographic areas, management areas (MAs), special areas and designations on SJNF lands that have unique resources or management conditions. Geographic areas are identified that describe the social, economic, and environmental settings of the three administrative ranger districts of the SJNF. MAs describe the intensity of management, overall appearance and activities that can be expected within each MA. Specially designated lands are formal designations, including suitable WSR, RNAs, and several other special designations. Also included in this chapter is direction for other areas with unique resources and management conditions such as lands managed for wilderness characteristics, Chimney Rock National Monument, the Hermosa Watershed, and the HD Mountains. All areas described in this chapter are identified on associated maps.

In addition to desired conditions and objectives, many of the areas in this chapter include “allowable use” tables. These tables portray the suitability determinations made under the grazing, timber, and travel programs in Chapter 2 as they apply to specific areas, and also identify additional uses that are listed as allowable, restricted, or prohibited. Restricted activities are those that are allowed, but may only be allowed during certain times of the year, within specific areas, or under specific conditions. The activities in the tables are described below.

- **Fire Managed for Resource Benefit:** This activity includes managing natural fires in order to achieve a management objective and/or a desired condition. Wildfire is only part of an overall appropriate response. The application of fire managed for resource benefit will always depend on site-specific conditions, current and predicted future weather, and fuel conditions.
- **Prescribed Burning:** This activity includes igniting fires in order to achieve a management objective and/or a desired condition. Managed active burning will be prescribed and monitored to burn at specified intensities over a defined area.
- **Mechanical Fuels Treatments:** This activity includes any method to alter live or dead vegetation with hand tools or by machine (including thinning with chainsaws or any commercial machine, shredder, chipper, or similar equipment) to break up fuel connectivity, including removal of fuels from treatment sites.
- **Timber Production:** This activity involves the removal of wood fiber for commercial-utilization purposes. Harvesting for timber production purposes is scheduled and regulated.
- **Timber Harvesting as a Tool:** This involves the removal of wood fiber to achieve management objectives and/or desired conditions. If an area is suitable for timber harvesting as a tool but not suitable for timber production, timber harvesting would only occur in order to achieve a management objective and/or a desired condition (including, but not limited to fuels reduction and/or wildlife habitat improvements).
- **Commercial Use of Special Forest Products and Firewood:** This includes firewood, Christmas trees, tree transplants, mushrooms, medicinal herbs, boughs, and cones. Commercial use would occur through a permitting process. Personal use (use not involving the sale of forest products) may require a permit.
- **Land Use ROWs, Special Use Permits, and Utility Corridors:** This includes energy corridors, linear transmission, communication sites, and other land use authorizations.
- **Livestock Grazing:** This includes permitted livestock grazing as authorized by an agency grazing permit on designated grazing allotments or areas outside grazing allotments where livestock grazing could be used as a vegetation management tool. Allotments contain lands that are both suitable and unsuitable for livestock grazing. Stocking rates would be based only on lands suitable for livestock grazing as determined at the project level.

- **Facilities:** This includes infrastructure and structures placed on public lands for resource protection, administrative use, and/or public enjoyment.
- **Motorized (summer):** This includes the use of any motorized wheeled vehicle (including four-wheel drives, dirt bikes, and ATVs/OHVs) during the year when the ground is not covered by snow.
- **Motorized (winter):** This includes the use of snowmobiles and other motorized winter vehicles during the snow-covered months.
- **Non-Motorized (summer and winter):** This includes hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, and/or other means of non-motorized recreation. Non-motorized use does not include mountain biking because it is addressed as a separate activity below.
- **Mechanical Transport:** This includes any contrivance that moves people or material in or over land, water, or air that has moving parts, that provides a mechanical advantage to the user, and that is powered by a living or non-living power source. This includes, but is not limited to, bicycles, game carriers, carts, and wagons. It does not include wheelchairs when used as necessary medical appliances. It also does not include skis, snowshoes, rafts, canoes, sleds, travois, or similar primitive devices without moving parts.
- **Road Construction (permanent or temporary):** This includes the building of roads for a specified use or uses, either permanent or temporary.
- **Minerals - Leasable:** This includes oil and gas, coal, and other leasable minerals, including solid leasable minerals such as sodium, potassium, and others. All SJNF lands made available for lease are subject to standard lease terms, which require operators of leases, as well as leasable mineral permits and licenses, to minimize adverse impacts to air, water, land, visual, cultural, and biological resources. Special lease stipulations are applied to a lease if additional restrictions on the rights of lessees are required to protect environmental resources. Special lease stipulations include NSO, CSU, and TL. Stipulations applied to new leases are described in Appendix H, Resource Management Stipulations for New Leases, of this LRMP.
- **Minerals - Locatable:** This includes minerals that are subject to claim under the Mining Law of 1872 that are open to entry for exploration and development (unless withdrawn by law). Unless lands have been withdrawn by law, development of locatable minerals is generally allowable on SJNF lands; however, additional measures may be applied to plans and notices to prevent undue and unnecessary degradation in areas with concerns for specific resources or management designations.
- **Mineral - Salable:** This includes sand, gravel, and decorative rock for commercial or personal use, which may be disposed of through sales contract to individuals or for-profit enterprises, or through free use permits to government and non-profit entities.

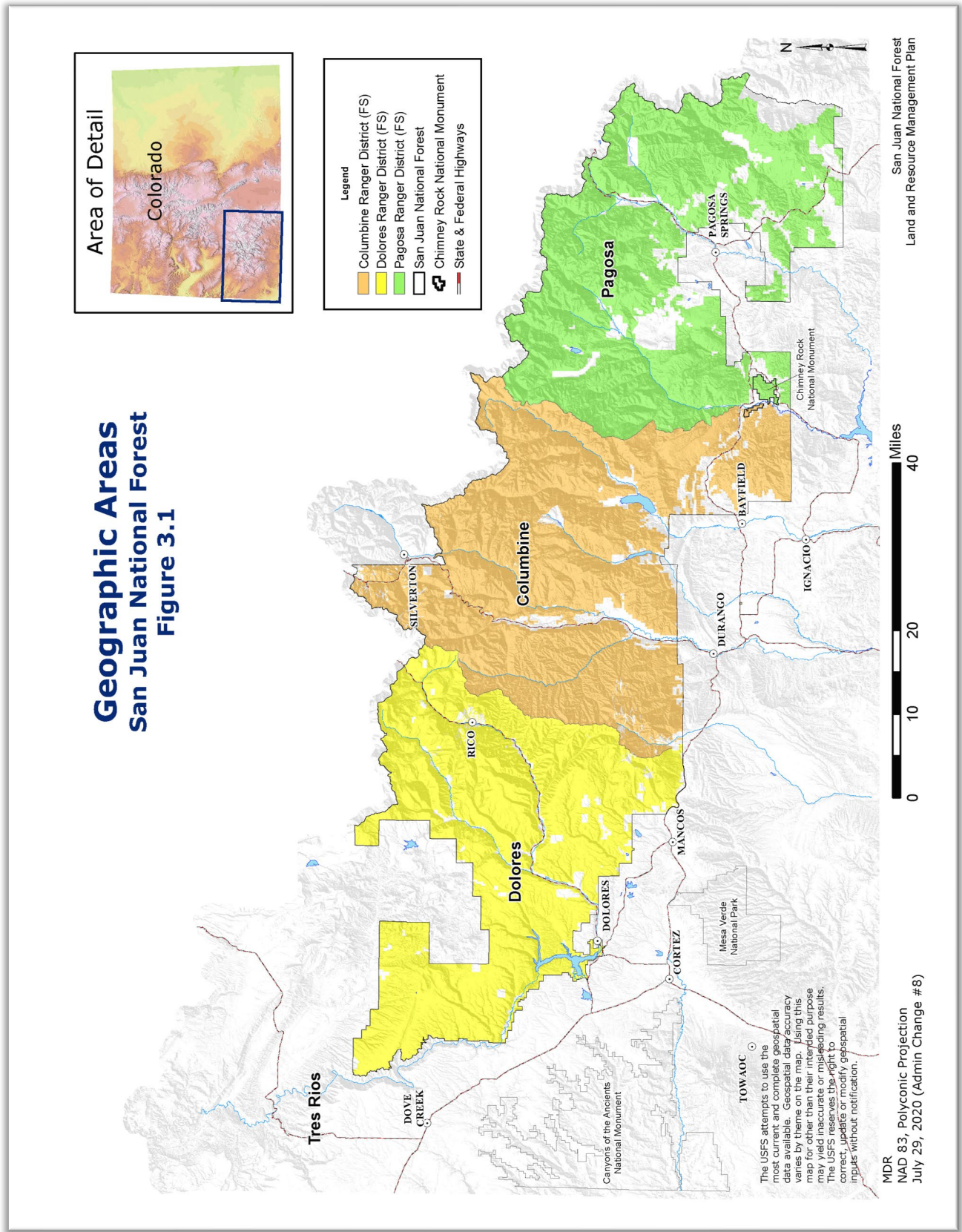


Figure 3.1: Geographic Areas

3.1 Tres Rios Field Office Geographic Area

This area is applicable only to BLM lands.

3.2 Dolores Ranger District Geographic Area

The Dolores Ranger District geographic area lies predominantly in Montezuma, Dolores, and San Miguel Counties, and consists of approximately 597,126 acres of NFS lands. The social center of this geographic area is the town of Cortez (with a population of approximately 8,500 people). Cortez is the Montezuma County seat, as well as the commercial center for the smaller communities of Mancos, Dolores, Rico, and Dove Creek (which is the Dolores County seat), all with populations of 1,200 or less.

The main river systems of this geographic area are the Mancos River (which has headwaters in the La Plata Mountains) and the Dolores River (which has headwaters in the Lizard Head wilderness). Both rivers provide irrigation for pastures, hay meadows, and other crops on private lands in the area. McPhee Reservoir, on the Dolores River, is the second largest body of water in Colorado. It is an important recreation area, as well as a source of domestic and irrigation water. Use of water from these rivers has greatly affected both historical settlement patterns and current land uses.

Significant portions of the San Juan Skyway traverse the Dolores geographic area (including U.S. Highway 145, from Lizard Head Pass down through Rico to Dolores and Cortez, and from there U.S. Highway 160 to the Montezuma-La Plata County line, which is the boundary with the Columbine geographic area). Other major segments of the skyway are to the east, in the Columbine geographic area, and on the Uncompahgre National Forest to the north (going through Ouray, Ridgway, and Telluride). Since its designation as a scenic byway, the San Juan Skyway has been one of the most popular recreation attractions in southwest Colorado. It is one of only 26 All-American Roads in the United States. The skyway's diverse natural and cultural resources, combined with its unique and spectacular scenery, give it a claim as one of the crown jewels of scenic byways in the entire nation. Portions of the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway are also located within the Dolores geographic area.

The area includes high densities of significant Puebloan archeological sites (including the Anasazi Archeological District around McPhee Reservoir), as well as more modern mining, railroad, logging, and grazing historical sites.

The San Juan Mountains, which are part of the southern Rocky Mountains, fall into the South-Central Highlands Section. The San Juan Mountains are unusual within the north-south orientation of the Rocky Mountains, in that they are a large mountain range with an east-west orientation. This part of the geographic area includes the Lizard Head wilderness and several CRAs (including Storm Peak, Ryman, Black Hawk Mountain, and portions of San Miguel and Hermosa). This area has much less human development than the rest of the Dolores geographic area, with most of the development occurring on private land in the Dolores River valley (including the town of Rico). The area also contains some roads associated with historic, and current, timber harvesting and historic mining (especially near Rico). Big game hunting is popular in the fall. Aspen trees are an important component of the vegetation here, both for their scenic quality and to support the wood product plants in the area.

"The Pine Zone" is located on the west side of the geographic area and was heavily logged in the early 1900s. This area is still being logged; however, the emphasis is now on restoring more natural conditions. Cattle grazing occurs over most of the area. The area is also popular for big game hunting.

Desired Conditions

- 3.2.1 Public lands continue to function as "working lands." Collaborative forest health and rangeland management practices reduce wildfire hazards, contribute to the viability of private ranch lands, and sustain ecosystem services (including watershed health and wildlife habitat). The local economy benefits from, and contributes to, sustainable resource management, as well as the preservation of open space.

- 3.2.2 The Dolores River system remains a primary water source in order to meet domestic and agricultural needs while, at the same time, contributing a wide array of recreational, ecological, and aesthetic services. Collaborative efforts support watershed health, instream water quality, scenic assets, healthy native and sport fish populations, rafting and flat water boating opportunities, and flow and spill management below McPhee Dam in support of ecological, recreational, reservoir management, and water rights imperatives.
- 3.2.3 A variety of looped single- and two-track opportunities for motorized and mechanized recreation exist at a range of elevations, offering different levels of difficulty. Motorized and mechanized opportunities are balanced with opportunities for foot and horseback access to areas of relative quiet and solitude at a variety of elevations. Much of the primary access to these areas is shared, based on mutual courtesy and on a strong stewardship ethic that is primarily self-enforced and maintained by individuals and user groups.
- 3.2.4 Cultural and historic resources are protected, interpreted, and promoted through an integrated, interagency network involving the BLM's Anasazi Heritage Center and Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, the Ute Mountain Tribal Park, Mesa Verde National Park, and community visitor centers (including the Cortez Cultural Center, the Galloping Goose Museum, and the Mancos Visitor Center). Residents and visitors are educated and oriented in a manner that enhances and encourages their participation in the enjoyment and stewardship of cultural resources (which are significant contributors to the local economy).
- 3.2.5 Scenic vistas are protected and enhanced through collaborative efforts with partners (including the Colorado Byways Commission, CPW, the Montezuma Land Conservancy, the Office of Community Services, CDOT, Montezuma and Dolores Counties, and the Town of Rico).
- 3.2.6 The McPhee Reservoir area is one of the Four Corners' "recreation gems." A viable marina facility is re-established that offers, at a minimum, basic services for those enjoying water sports and fishing. A strong connection exists between the reservoir and the town of Dolores.
- 3.2.7 Ponderosa pine forests on the mesa tops of the Dolores geographic area display structural diversity (including more old growth stands, stands with a clumped structure, stands with large old trees, snags, and large dead and downed wood on the forest floor).
- 3.2.8 Narrowleaf cottonwood riparian areas and wetland ecosystem communities throughout the low and middle elevations of the Dolores geographic area display moderate to high canopy cover (greater than 20%) of narrowleaf cottonwood trees, including young-, middle-, and old-age classes.
- 3.2.9 Willow riparian areas and wetland ecosystem communities throughout the low- and mid-elevations of the Dolores geographic area display moderate to high canopy cover (greater than 20%) of willows, including young-, middle-, and old-age classes.
- 3.2.10 Aspen management maintains age and class diversity and promotes healthy stand conditions while, at the same time, continuing to supply a sustainable supply of aspen products to the local and regional industries.
- 3.2.11 Timber and fire management is used in order to restore stands to an uneven-age condition where natural fire regimes and natural processes can occur, and where a multi-aged and multi-cohort forest structure resilient to disturbance is established. Timber management in the ponderosa pine incorporates restoration forestry into commercial timber sales at an appropriate scale that provide support, stabilization, and diversification of the local industry.

See relevant sections in Chapter 3 for specific management direction for the following areas within the Dolores geographic area:

- Wilderness (Lizard Head)
- USFS recommended wilderness areas (portions of the Lizard Head and Hermosa CRAs)

- RNAs (Naraguinnep and Grizzly Peak)
- Scenic, historic, and backcountry byways (portions of the San Juan Skyway and the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway)
- National recreation and scenic trails (Calico and Highline trails)
- Special Areas (Rico and McPhee)

Management Area Composition: Table 3.2.1 shows the distribution of MAs within the Dolores geographic area.

Table 3.2.1: Management Area Distribution in the Dolores Geographic Area

| Management Area | Acres | Percentage of Geographic Area (USFS lands) |
|--|----------------|--|
| MA 1: natural processes dominate | 34,829 | 5.8% |
| MA 2: special areas and designations | 34,751 | 5.8% |
| MA 3: natural landscapes, with limited management | 209,282 | 35.1% |
| MA 4: high-use recreation emphasis | 28,045 | 4.7% |
| MA 5: active management (commodity production in order to meet multiple-use goals) | 290,090 | 48.5% |
| MA 7: public and private lands intermix | 0 | 0.0% |
| MA 8: highly developed areas | 602 | 0.1% |
| Total | 597,599 | 100% |

3.3 Columbine Ranger District Geographic Area

The Columbine geographic area forms the central part of the planning area. It is situated primarily in La Plata and San Juan Counties, with some lands in Hinsdale and Archuleta Counties, and consists of approximately 691,150 acres of NFS lands. The Columbine geographic area shares a northern border with the Uncompahgre and Rio Grande National Forests, and with the BLM Tres Rios, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison Field Offices.

The social center of this geographic area is the city of Durango (with a population of approximately 16,000 people). It is the county seat for La Plata County (with a population of approximately 47,000 people). It is also the commercial center for the smaller communities of Bayfield (approximately 1,800 people), Ignacio (approximately 775 people), and Silverton (approximately 600 people; which is the San Juan County seat). Farmington, Aztec, and Bloomfield (New Mexico) have ties to the area as trade centers, support for the oil and gas industry, and recreation users (especially of La Plata Canyon).

Durango Mountain Resort (DMR) lies between Silverton and Durango, off of U.S. Highway 550. DMR has a base area on private land, with some additional base facilities and ski runs permitted on the SJNF. La Plata and San Juan Counties have approved a Planned Unit Development for the private lands adjacent to the DMR, with the potential for over 2,000 resort housing and lodging units supported by substantial commercial development. The likely increase in population adjacent to public lands will result in a need for close coordination on issues (including trail development, fuels reduction, and wildlife habitat).

Significant portions of San Juan Skyway traverse the Columbine geographic area (including as U.S. Highway 550 from Durango north to Silverton, and over Red Mountain Pass, which is the boundary with the Uncompahgre National Forest). A lower elevation portion of the skyway follows U.S. Highway 160 from Mancos Hill to Durango. The other towns in the Columbine geographic area are situated at lower elevations (and have milder climates). Durango is situated at the intersection of U.S. Highway 550 (which connects with Silverton to the north, and Aztec and Farmington, New Mexico, to the south) and U.S. Highway 160 (which connects with Cortez to the west and Pagosa Springs to the east). The city is a hub for the area. Durango is one of the more mature tourism towns in Colorado, with a historic downtown. It is supported by tourism related to the Durango-Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, the Animas River, DMR, Mesa Verde National Park, and the Weminuche Wilderness area. Durango is one of a handful of towns that can make a good claim to the title “mountain bike capital of the world.” Durango is also home to Fort

Lewis College. It is the governmental, commercial, and entertainment center for southwest Colorado. Residents of Durango have easy access to public lands within the planning area. Bayfield has been a bedroom community to Durango but is developing a significant business infrastructure of its own, which is expected to grow in the coming years.

The main river systems in the Columbine geographic area are the Animas (with headwaters above Silverton) and the Los Pinos, or Pine (with headwaters in the Weminuche Wilderness). Both rivers drain into the San Juan River in northern New Mexico, which then joins the Colorado River. Water diversion for agriculture and municipal use is important on both rivers. Both river systems also contain relatively pristine stretches that are valued for their scenery and recreational opportunities.

Vallecito Reservoir is in this geographic area; it is the most developed lakeshore resort and recreation area in southwest Colorado. Above Vallecito Reservoir, and nearby Lemon Reservoir, are access points to the Weminuche Wilderness. The Los Pinos River flows south from Bayfield through the town of Ignacio, which is a tri-ethnic community that serves as the headquarters of the Southern Ute Tribe. The Southern Ute Tribe has combined decades of revenues from energy production with excellent management in order to become one of the wealthiest tribes in the country.

The higher country, part of the San Juan Mountains, is characterized by steep, rugged terrain with predominantly spruce-fir, aspen, and mixed conifer forests. Much of the area to the east of U.S. Highway 550 and the Animas River is in either the Weminuche Wilderness or in the Piedra Area (designated in the 1993 Colorado Wilderness Act to be managed to preserve its wilderness character). CRAs include Baldy, Florida River, Runlett Park, and smaller areas adjacent to the Weminuche Wilderness area and the Piedra Area.

The Missionary Ridge Fire in 2002 burned approximately 73,000 acres in the area north of Durango (east of U.S. Highway 550), over to the western edge of the Piedra Area (east of Vallecito Reservoir). Early rehabilitation efforts have gone well; however, restoration would continue to be a concern during the life of the LRMP. Continued cooperation with local communities (including Vallecito) that were greatly affected by the fire and its aftermath will continue to be a management goal.

Much of the country west of U.S. Highway 550 is unroaded, including the 37,400-acre Hermosa Creek Wilderness, and the Hermosa roadless area consisting of about 43,200 acres. This roadless area lies within the larger 70,600-acre Hermosa Creek Special Management Area, designated by Congress in 2014. The Hermosa Trail, which parallels the main stem of Hermosa Creek, is considered one of the top mountain bike rides in the country. The eastern portion of the watershed, including the trail, is managed as MA 2 - Special Areas. The San Miguel area is another large roadless area (a significant portion of which is to be managed as a MA 1, including Engineer Mountain).

This area is characterized by low- to mid-elevation mountains, mesas, hills, and valleys with mild to moderate winters and predominantly mixed conifer, ponderosa pine, pinyon-juniper, and mountain grassland vegetation. Coalbed methane reserves exist in large quantities in the northern San Juan Basin area. Most of this area was leased for oil and gas development prior to the development of this LRMP with additional development authorized by the Northern San Juan Basin Coalbed Methane EIS (BLM and USFS 2006) and ROD in 2007 (USFS and BLM 2007). Direction for the area, consistent with that ROD, is found in Section 3.25 of this LRMP.

The vast amount of undeveloped land that provides a setting for backcountry recreation is a primary reason people visit this area. Additionally, the area contains some unique access into high-elevation remote areas (including the Durango-Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad's access to Weminuche Wilderness trailheads, and historic mining roads into the high-elevation mountains around Silverton and in La Plata Canyon). Compared to the other geographic areas, the Columbine geographic area has the most trailheads providing access into the backcountry. Given local population, visitors, tourism amenities, access to the backcountry, and the proximity of other regional destinations, the Columbine geographic area experiences the greatest amount of recreation users and resulting recreation management challenges.

The economies of the communities in the Columbine geographic area have evolved towards an increasing emphasis on amenity migration (the movement of people for pleasure rather than for economic reasons), recreation tourism, and resort development, but still have ties to multiple-use management. The historic connections of La Plata County to ranching, hunting, and public land grazing are of continuing importance, as the area struggles to protect the scenic, wildlife, and cultural aspects that ranching and outfitting/guiding play in the overall appeal of the area. Although the historic ties to sawmilling have substantially diminished, the Missionary Ridge Fire was a reminder of the continued need for forest management and the economies that help support forest management on public and private lands. The fact that La Plata County is one of the top energy-producing counties in Colorado also presents multiple-use management challenges.

Desired Conditions

- 3.3.1 The full spectrum of outdoor recreational opportunities, ranging from wilderness settings to in-town access, is provided. This is the result of a collaborative process for the allocation and sharing of uses and stewardship responsibilities designed to protect the quality of the human experience and health of the natural environment.
- 3.3.2 Extensive heritage resources remain central to the area's economy, culture, and recreational experience. Heritage resources, as well as the natural settings that make these resources so unique, are protected and sustainable.
- 3.3.3 Destination and resort development, especially along the river corridors, is planned, developed, and managed in order to minimize its impact on the health of surrounding landscapes, natural resources, and communities. This is the result of sustained cooperation from the land management agencies, interested citizens, state and local agencies, and developers.
- 3.3.4 Oil and gas development is planned, conducted, and reclaimed to a standard commensurate with the ecological, aesthetic, and human values attached to the land where the extraction is occurring.
- 3.3.5 Opportunities for research, particularly applied research, are fully developed with local partners (including Fort Lewis College, the Mountain Studies Institute, and the Center for Snow and Avalanche Research, as well as other interested groups and institutions).
- 3.3.6 Winter sports conflicts are reduced through cooperative efforts between motorized and non-motorized advocates. Some areas may emphasize one use over another, but many potential problems are resolved through agreements on locations of parking areas, grooming, and route locations. High-quality opportunities are available for both snowmobiling and backcountry skiing.
- 3.3.7 The wetlands and fens associated with the upper Pine River and Flint Creek watersheds in the Columbine geographic area (where a high density of fens occur) are protected and have the water sources and hydrologic systems necessary in order to support and sustain these ecosystems.
- 3.3.8 The wetlands and fens associated with the Lime Creek watershed and the Mountain View Crest and Molas Lake areas in the Columbine geographic area (where high concentrations of wetlands and potential fens occur) have the water sources and hydrologic systems necessary in order to support and sustain these ecosystems.
- 3.3.9 The Missionary Ridge wildfire area in the Columbine geographic area displays less bare soil and erosion, and a higher abundance and distribution of native herbaceous plant species.
- 3.3.10 The landscapes associated with the intensive gas development in the Columbine geographic area display minimal fragmentation. The major vegetation types associated with those lands, particularly the ponderosa pine forests, pinyon-juniper woodlands, and mountain shrublands, display compositions and structures similar to those that occurred before the development.

See relevant sections in Chapter 3 for specific management direction for the following areas within the Columbine geographic area:

- Wilderness (Weminuche and Hermosa Creek)
- USFS recommended wilderness areas (a portion of the Hermosa CRA and the Elk Park portion of the Weminuche Adjacent CRA)
- Recommended WSR segments (Hermosa Creek and tributaries, Los Pinos and tributaries, above Vallecito Reservoir)
- RNAs (Electra and Hermosa)
- Botanical areas (Chattanooga Iron Fen)
- Archeological areas (Falls Creek)
- Scenic, historic, and backcountry byways (portions of the San Juan Skyway)
- National recreation and scenic trails (portions of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Colorado Trail)
- Special Areas (HD Mountains)

Management Area Composition: Table 3.3.1 shows the distribution of MAs within the Columbine geographic area.

Table 3.3.1: Management Area Distribution in the Columbine Geographic Area

| Management Area | Acres | Percentage of Geographic Area (USFS lands) |
|--|----------------|--|
| MA 1: natural processes dominate | 300,795 | 43.7% |
| MA 2: special areas and designations | 119,204 | 17.4% |
| MA 3: natural landscapes, with limited management | 176,106 | 25.6% |
| MA 4: high-use recreation emphasis | 29,258 | 4.3% |
| MA 5: active management (commodity production in order to meet multiple-use goals) | 51,975 | 7.6% |
| MA 7: public and private lands intermix | 7,832 | 1.1% |
| MA 8: highly developed areas | 2,366 | 0.3% |
| Total | 687,536 | 100% |

3.4 Pagosa Ranger District Geographic Area

The Pagosa geographic area is the easternmost geographic area in the planning area. It is bounded by the Continental Divide (the boundary with the Rio Grande National Forest) on the north and the east. It is predominantly situated in Archuleta, Hinsdale, and Mineral Counties, with some lands in Rio Grande and Conejos Counties. The Pagosa Ranger District consists of approximately 585,770 acres of NFS lands.

The social center of the geographic area is the town of Pagosa Springs (with a population of approximately 1,620 people). Although Pagosa Springs is the only incorporated town in the geographic area, much of the population of Archuleta County (with a population of approximately 10,000 people) is in low-density residential and second-home enclaves, most notably in the Pagosa Lakes area. The geographic area includes significant acres of Hinsdale and Mineral Counties, but the towns, as well as almost all of the population of those counties, are situated north of the Continental Divide and the Weminuche Wilderness area (with little social connection and limited road access to the residents and businesses in the Pagosa geographic area).

Pagosa Springs sits at the intersection of U.S. Highway 160 (before the road turns north to head over Wolf Creek Pass) and U.S. Highway 84 (which heads south into northern New Mexico). Pagosa Springs was historically a compact sawmill and ranching town, with a Hispanic and pioneer Anglo ranching and sawmilling culture supported by productive forest land and livestock grazing. The area has long-standing ties with people coming out of Texas and New Mexico in the summer (to where it is cool and green) and from around the county in the fall (many to hunt big game). Besides the pleasant climate, the area is

known for outstanding scenery. Many winter visitors to Wolf Creek Ski Area, as well as backcountry skiers and snowmobilers, stay in Pagosa Springs (rather than in South Fork, which is on the other side of Wolf Creek Pass).

On a percentage basis, Archuleta County is the fastest growing county in southwest Colorado. Amenity migration and second-home development began in the 1970s (with the development in the Pagosa Lakes area west of Pagosa Springs) and now fills most of the triangle of developable land between U.S. Highway 160, the Piedra Road, and the forest boundary east of Martinez Creek. Similar development has pushed against the USFS boundary to the west of Pagosa Springs and north of U.S. Highway 160. Much of the NFS lands around Pagosa Springs are in MA 7 settings (public and private lands intermix), which reflects this development. In addition to fire risk reduction in these areas, development of trails and recreation opportunities and the protection of wildlife habitat (especially winter range) are important.

The main river systems in this geographic area are the Piedra River (which has headwaters in the Weminuche Wilderness area) and the San Juan River (with the headwaters of the West Fork of the San Juan beginning north of Pagosa Springs in the Weminuche Wilderness area, and the East Fork of the San Juan beginning northeast of Pagosa Springs in the South San Juan wilderness area). These rivers, and their tributaries, are important for recreation and scenic quality, as well as for irrigation and domestic water supplies. They also support a diverse mix of aquatic habitats and riparian and wetland ecosystems that contribute to the ecologic and economic values of the area.

Approximately 85% of the public lands in the Pagosa geographic area are in the South-Central Highlands Section (including portions of the Weminuche Wilderness area, the South San Juan wilderness area, and the Piedra Area). The Treasure Mountain and Turkey Creek CRAs (which lie between the Weminuche and the South San Juan wilderness areas) contain important linkages and corridors for wildlife movement. Other IRAs include Graham Peak and areas adjacent to the Weminuche and South San Juan wilderness areas and the Piedra Area. These areas are managed, for the most part, in order to preserve their undeveloped character.

At middle and lower elevations in this geographic area, there is an extensive network of roads, primarily left by historical logging. These roads support many forms of dispersed recreational use and camping, and are heavily used during hunting season. Restoration-oriented logging is expected in the ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forest found in this area. This area receives more precipitation than most of the Southwest and has good growing conditions for timber. Large trees, including aspen, are common.

Having moderate climates, the lower elevation mountains, mesas, and valleys are dominated by mountain grasslands, and mixed conifer, ponderosa pine, and pinyon-juniper woodlands, where human settlement has evolved. Much of the human development in the Pagosa geographic area is at the interface with forest lands, presenting wildfire hazard mitigation challenges that are being actively addressed through county policy, community wildfire protection planning, and mitigation.

A related challenge is the network of access roads connecting U.S. Highway 160 and U.S. Highway 84 to the SJNF. These roads provide access to residential subdivisions and other private in-holdings. They also provide recreation access to public lands for local visitors, as well as for visitors from out of the area. The pressure on these roads presents maintenance demands and costs that must be worked out collaboratively among local, state, and other federal agencies; property owners; and public land users. Growth in the Pagosa geographic area has reached a point where more domestic water and water storage are needed in order to meet increasing demand. This requires continued cooperation, in terms of exploring alternatives that involve storage and/or diversion facilities located on federal lands (where protecting the ecological integrity of affected stream channels is mandated).

The Pagosa geographic area's most striking heritage resource is the Chimney Rock National Monument. The user-supported interpretive tours, special events, and visitor center at this unique pre-Puebloan site are conducted and staffed by a very active group of volunteer citizens.

Desired Conditions

- 3.4.1 Management activities maintain or enhance the ecological sustainability and integrity of the area. The demands of residents and users are balanced with the protection of watersheds, wildlife habitat, vegetation, soil productivity, and undisturbed natural areas.
- 3.4.2 The Pagosa geographic area is a destination for hunters, hikers, and motor vehicle enthusiasts. It promotes partnerships and responsible stewardship in all recreational uses of the public lands.
- 3.4.3 The local economy is supported and diversified by agency activities and programs (including maintaining roads, facilities, and campgrounds; supporting stewardship and partnerships; and providing a wide spectrum of recreation and tourism opportunities).
- 3.4.4 The USFS recognizes the needs of the area's growing population of residents and visitors. SJNF facilities (including roads, bridges, campgrounds, and trailheads) are designed and maintained to the proper standards for safe and efficient access to public lands.
- 3.4.5 The SJNF actively cooperates with local governments, residents, and land users in order to maintain and enhance the safety and enjoyment of the public lands. This is accomplished through the protection of scenery, the mitigation of WUI fire danger, and land ownership adjustments.
- 3.4.6 White fir is less abundant in the warm-dry and cool-moist mixed conifer forests of the Pagosa geographic area. The rare bristlecone pine forests that only occur in the Pagosa geographic area are protected and sustainable.

Please see relevant sections in Chapter 3 for specific management direction for the following areas within the Pagosa geographic area:

- Wilderness (Weminuche and South San Juan)
- Other Congressional designations (Piedra Area)
- USFS recommended wilderness areas (portions of the Turkey Creek, Monk Rock, and Weminuche Adjacent CRAs)
- Recommended WSR segments (the Piedra River, from U.S. Highway 160 to the Forks; East Fork of the Piedra, north of the wilderness boundary; Middle Fork of the Piedra; and West and East Fork of the San Juan River)
- Chimney Rock National Monument
- RNAs (Williams Creek, Martinez Creek, Hidden Mesas, Navajo River, Piedra, Porpyry Gulch)
- Botanical areas (O'Neal Hill, site of the globally rare Pagosa Springs bladderpod [*Lesquerella pruinos*]).
- National recreation and scenic trails (portions of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail).

Management Area Composition: Table 3.4.1 shows the distribution of MAs within the Pagosa geographic area.

Table 3.4.1: Management Area Distribution in the Pagosa Geographic Area

| Management Area | Acres | Percentage of Geographic Area (USFS lands) |
|--|----------------|--|
| MA 1: natural processes dominate | 252,306 | 43.4% |
| MA 2: special areas and designations | 9,089 | 1.5% |
| MA 3: natural landscapes, with limited management | 169,612 | 29.2% |
| MA 4: high-use recreation emphasis | 8,623 | 1.5% |
| MA 5: active management (commodity production in order to meet multiple-use goals) | 100,611 | 17.3% |
| MA 7: public and private lands intermix | 40,605 | 7.0% |
| MA 8: highly developed areas | 824 | 0.1% |
| Total | 581,670 | 100% |

3.5 Management Areas

MA designations apply to all SJNF lands within the planning area. MAs describe the intensity of management that can be expected within each MA, ranging from areas where natural processes dominate and shape the landscape to areas that are intensely managed. In addition to the level of management, MAs also provide a general sense of how the landscape will appear and identify uses and activities that are allowed. To varying degrees, multiple uses occur within all the MAs. The allowable use tables for each MA portray the suitability determinations made under the grazing, timber, and travel programs in Chapter 2 as they apply to each MA, and also identify additional uses that are listed as allowable, restricted, or prohibited (if there are discrepancies between allowable use tables and grazing, timber, or travel suitability maps, the suitability map takes precedence). Table 3.5.1 identifies the distribution of MAs across the SJNF (see also Figure 3.5).

Table 3.5.1 Management Area Allocations on San Juan National Forest Lands

| Management Area | Acres | Percent of SJNF |
|---|------------------|-----------------|
| MA 1 Natural Processes Dominate | 587,930 | 31.5% |
| MA 2 Special Areas and Designations | 163,044 | 8.7% |
| MA 3 Natural Landscapes, with Limited Management | 555,000 | 29.7% |
| MA 4 High-Use Recreation Emphasis | 65,926 | 3.6% |
| MA 5 Active Management (commodity production in order to meet multiple-use goals) | 442,676 | 23.7% |
| MA 7 Public and Private Lands Intermix | 48,437 | 2.6% |
| MA 8 Highly Developed Areas | 3,791 | 0.2% |
| Total | 1,866,804 | 100% |

Some exceptions may apply to activities, particularly those activities that are pursuant to reserved or outstanding rights, or as provided by statute or treaty. Additionally, there are 529,700 acres of CRAs on the SJNF. CRAs are governed by the Colorado Roadless Rule and may have additional restrictions beyond the general suitability identified by MAs. When guidance in a forest plan is more restrictive than direction described in the Colorado Roadless Rule, actions must be consistent with the more restrictive direction.

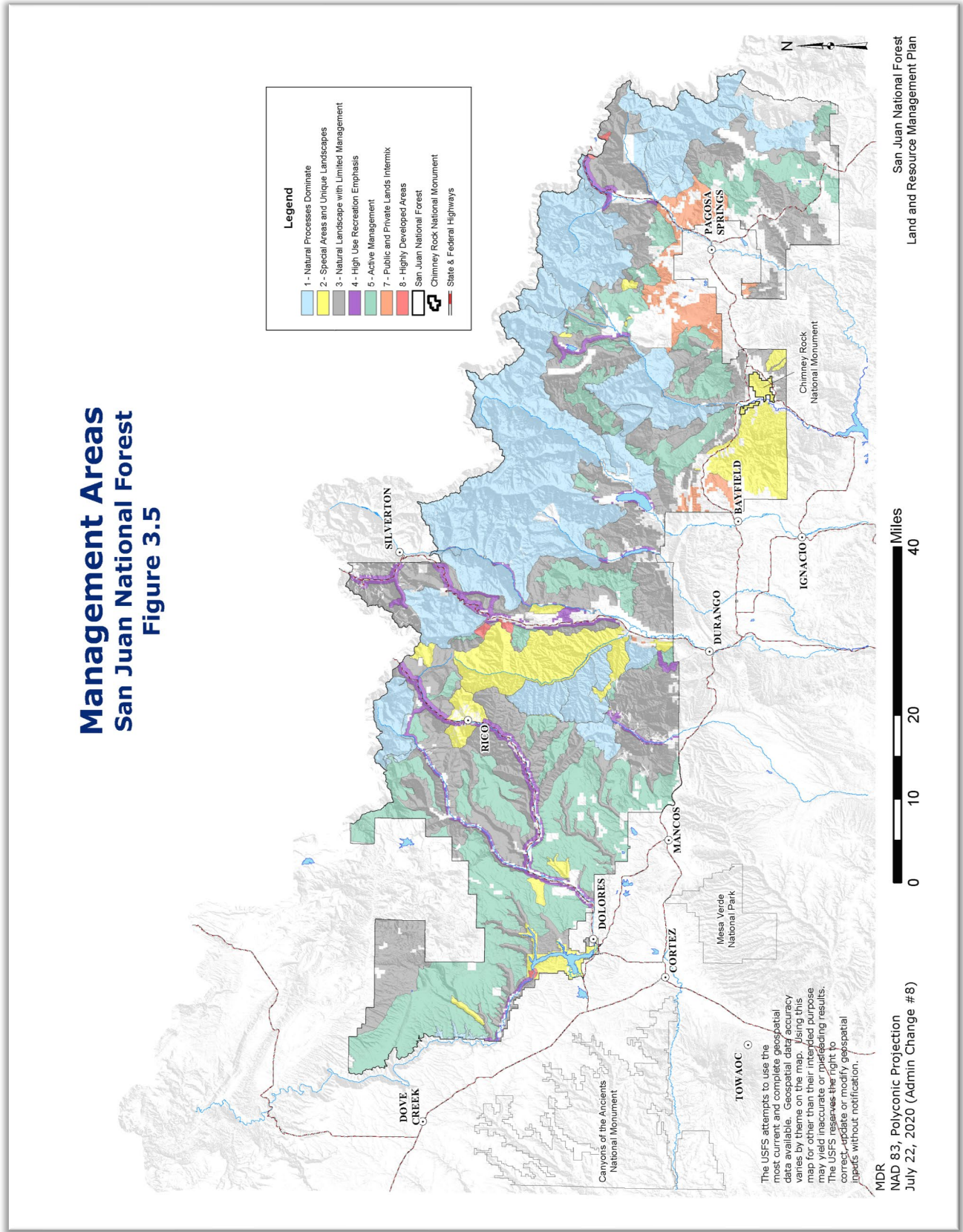


Figure 3.5: Management Areas, San Juan National Forest

Management Area 1 (MA 1): Natural Processes Dominate

These relatively pristine lands are places where natural ecological processes operate free from human influences. Succession, fire, insects, disease, floods, and other natural processes and disturbance events shape the composition, structure, and landscape patterns of the vegetation. These areas contribute significantly to ecosystem and species diversity and sustainability, serve as habitat for fauna and flora, and offer wildlife corridors, reference areas, primitive recreation opportunities, and places for people seeking natural scenery and solitude. Roads and human structures are absent and management activities are limited on MA 1 lands. Motorized travel, and in most cases, motorized equipment are prohibited. MA 1 areas include designated wilderness areas, the Piedra Area, WSAs, and other lands where a primary desired condition is to maintain the undeveloped natural character of the landscape. See Table 3.5.2 for a list of allowable, restricted, and prohibited uses within MA 1.

Table 3.5.2: Management Area 1 Allowable Uses

| Activities and Uses | Allowable - Restricted - Prohibited |
|---|--|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Allowable |
| Prescribed burning | Allowable |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Restricted (allowable when meeting desired conditions of the area) |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Prohibited |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Prohibited |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Prohibited |
| Livestock grazing | Allowable |
| Facilities | Prohibited |
| Motorized (summer) | Prohibited |
| Motorized (winter) | Prohibited |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Restricted (mountain bikes are allowable in MA 1 landscapes outside designated wilderness) |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Prohibited |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Restricted (designated wilderness, WSAs, and the Piedra Area are withdrawn from mineral leasing; a NSO stipulation would be applied to CRAs outside designated wilderness) |
| Minerals - locatable | Prohibited (wilderness areas are withdrawn from locatable mineral entry, subject to valid and existing rights; other MA 1 areas are open to mineral entry, but impacts to natural resource must be minimized; the agency can petition for the area to be withdrawn from mineral entry) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Prohibited |

Management Area 2 (MA 2): Special Areas and Designations

These areas possess one or more special feature or characteristic that makes them, and their management, unique from other areas within the planning area. MA 2 areas include RNAs, archeological areas, habitat areas, botanical areas, and other unique areas that have a mix of special features and uses. In general, MA 2 areas are managed in order to protect or enhance their unique characteristics; therefore, management intensity and suitability varies by each area. See subsequent sections in Chapter 3 of this LRMP for specific management direction for these MA 2 areas.

Management Area 3 (MA 3): Natural Landscapes with Limited Management

MA 3 lands are relatively unaltered places where natural ecological processes operate primarily free from human influences. Succession, fire, insects, disease, floods, and other natural processes and disturbance events predominantly shape the composition, structure, and landscape patterns of the vegetation. These areas contribute to ecosystem and species diversity and sustainability, serve as habitat for fauna and flora, and offer wildlife corridors, reference areas, primitive and semi-primitive recreation opportunities, and places for people seeking natural scenery and solitude.

On the SJNF, approximately 62% of the MA 3 lands are within CRAs. Management activities are allowed in MA 3 areas but are more limited in the CRAs. For MA 3 lands that are not CRAs, roads, infrastructure, and management activities are more common. Management activities include habitat and ecosystem restoration, livestock grazing, wildland fire and prescribed burning, hazardous fuels reduction, salvage logging following fire, insect epidemics and/or wind events, and invasive species treatments. Motorized equipment may be used, and temporary road construction is allowed; however, most roads would be closed upon project completion. Most MA 3 areas emphasize non-motorized recreation opportunities, but motorized travel occurs in some areas on existing roads and motorized trails. Most MA 3 lands are available for fluid mineral leasing with specific resource stipulations; however, surface occupancy and road construction is prohibited (i.e., NSO stipulation) in CRAs. See Table 3.5.3 for a list of allowable, restricted, and prohibited uses within MA 3.

Table 3.5.3: Management Area 3 Allowable Uses

| Activities and Uses | Allowable - Restricted - Prohibited |
|---|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Allowable |
| Prescribed burning | Allowable |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Allowable |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Allowable |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Allowable |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Restricted (development may be conditioned or prohibited in CRAs and lands managed for wilderness characteristics) |
| Livestock grazing | Allowable |
| Facilities | Restricted (development may be prohibited in CRAs and lands managed for wilderness characteristics) |
| Motorized (summer) | Restricted (motorized travel may occur in some MA 3 locations on designated routes) |
| Motorized (winter) | Restricted (oversnow motorized travel may occur in some MA 3 locations) |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Allowable |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Restricted (temporary road construction may occur in some MA 3 locations in order to achieve resource desired conditions; exceptions may apply for valid existing rights; additional road construction would also be allowed subject to valid existing rights and terms of development authorization) |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Restricted (special lease stipulations [i.e., NSO, CSU, TL] may apply to specific resources within MA 3 areas) |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry per the 1872 Mining Law; however, the exploration and development of mining claims may be subject to restrictions to protect resources) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Restricted (limited road access and other constraints in MA 3 landscapes may limit or preclude mineral collection.) |

Management Area 4 (MA 4): High-Use Recreation Emphasis

These areas are places with relatively high levels of recreation use that is managed in order to provide a wide variety of opportunities and experiences to a broad spectrum of visitors. They are associated with, and often provide, access to popular destinations, transportation corridors, scenic byways, scenic vistas, lakes, and streams. Developed recreation facilities that provide user comfort and resource protection are present.

These areas tend to be altered by human activities, but also include some more undeveloped places (including backcountry travel corridors). Visitors can expect to see a wide range of human activities and development (including roads, trails, interpretive sites, campgrounds, trailheads, fences, and day-use facilities). Both motorized and non-motorized activity is common. Natural ecological processes and disturbance agents (including succession and fire) are often influenced by humans on most of these lands. Resource uses (including livestock grazing, timber management, and wildlife management) may occur in conjunction with surrounding recreation and scenic objectives. Mineral development, mining, and alternative energy infrastructure is generally not compatible within MA 4 areas, e.g., in developed recreation sites or along scenic corridors. See Table 3.5.4 for a list of allowable, restricted, and prohibited uses within MA 4.

Table 3.5.4: Management Area 4 Allowable Uses

| Activities and Uses | Allowable - Restricted - Prohibited |
|---|--|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Restricted (may be used in order to meet desired conditions on adjacent lands) |
| Prescribed burning | Allowable |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Allowable |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Allowable |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Restricted (restrictions may apply within developed recreation areas) |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Allowable |
| Livestock grazing | Restricted (restrictions may apply within developed recreation areas) |
| Facilities | Allowable |
| Motorized (summer) | Allowable |
| Motorized (winter) | Allowable |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Allowable |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Allowable |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Restricted (special lease stipulations [i.e., NSO, CSU, TL] may apply to specific resources within MA 4 areas) |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry per the 1872 Mining Law; however, the exploration and development of mining claims may be subject to restrictions to protect resources) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Restricted (generally not compatible within developed recreation areas or scenic corridors) |

Management Area 5 (MA 5): Active Management

These multiple-use areas are places where active management occurs in order to meet a variety of social, economic, and ecological objectives. They are easily accessible, occurring mostly on roaded landscapes and relatively gentle terrain. These are lands where timber harvesting, oil and gas activities, and intensive livestock grazing occur and influence the composition, structure, and landscape patterns of the vegetation. Natural ecological processes and disturbance agents (including succession and fire) are often influenced by humans on many of these lands. A mosaic of vegetation conditions is often present, some showing the effects (impacts) of past management activities, others appearing predominantly natural. These areas contribute to ecosystem and species diversity and serve as habitat for fauna and flora.

In MA 5 areas, visitors can expect to see a wide range of human activities, development, and management investments (including roads, trails, fences, corrals, stock ponds, timber harvesting equipment, oil and gas wells, and livestock). Maintenance of past and current investments is anticipated to be continued for future management opportunities. Motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities are easily accessed by the relatively dense network of roads found on these lands. Hiking trails provide access for visitors (who can expect contact with others). Developed recreation facilities that provide user comfort and resource protection are present. See Table 3.5.5 for a list of allowable, restricted, and prohibited uses within MA 5.

Table 3.5.5: Management Area 5 Allowable Uses

| Activities and Uses | Allowable - Restricted - Prohibited |
|---|--|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Allowable |
| Prescribed burning | Allowable |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Allowable |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Allowable |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Allowable |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Allowable |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Allowable |
| Livestock grazing | Allowable |
| Facilities | Allowable |
| Motorized (summer) | Allowable |
| Motorized (winter) | Allowable |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Allowable |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Allowable |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Allowable (special lease stipulations [i.e., NSO, CSU, TL] may apply to specific resources within MA 5 areas) |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry per the 1872 Mining Law; however, the exploration and development of mining claims may be subject to restrictions to protect resources) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Allowable |

Management Area 7 (MA 7): Public and Private Lands Intermix

These areas are places where the public lands within the planning area are in close proximity to private lands; therefore, coordination with communities and local governments is essential in order to balance the needs of both parties. MA 7 areas are often associated with towns and cities, as well as with the houses, structures, people, and values associated with them. Visitors can expect to see a wide range of human activities and development (including roads, trails, fences, signs). In some MA 7 areas, oil and gas development is evident.

The proximity of these areas to private lands makes them a priority for fuels and vegetation treatments in order to reduce wildfire hazards. The backyard or rural recreation setting provided by many of these lands is an amenity to the active lifestyles and quality of life for local residents. Hiking, biking, and dog-walking are common activities. These areas contribute to ecosystem and species diversity, and serve as habitat for fauna and flora. Winter range for deer and elk is a common component of MA 7 areas, as are seasonal closures in order to reduce animal disturbance. Natural ecological processes and disturbance agents (including succession and fire) are influenced by humans on most of these lands.

Land exchanges, acquisitions, and disposals can be undertaken in order to improve the intermingled land ownership patterns that are common in MA 7 areas. Cooperation with adjacent landowners and local governments is common in order to improve access and convey roads to county jurisdictions, where appropriate. Cooperation is also be important in order to improve the transportation network, enhance protect resources, and allow authorized legitimate access to public lands. Utility and communication distribution lines tend to be more common in these areas. See Table 3.5.6 for a list of allowable, restricted, and prohibited uses within MA 7.

Table 3.5.6: Management Area 7 Allowable Uses

| Activities and Uses | Allowable - Restricted - Prohibited |
|---|--|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Prohibited |
| Prescribed burning | Allowable |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Allowable |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Allowable |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Allowable |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Allowable |
| Livestock grazing | Allowable |
| Facilities | Allowable |
| Motorized (summer) | Allowable |
| Motorized (winter) | Allowable |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Allowable |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Allowable |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Allowable (special lease stipulations [i.e., NSO, CSU, TL] may apply to specific resources within MA 7 areas) |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry per the 1872 Mining Law; however, the exploration and development of mining claims may be subject to restrictions to protect resources) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Allowable (depending on location and resources present, resource restrictions may apply as identified in the LRMP standards and guidelines) |

Management Area 8 (MA 8): Highly Developed Areas

These lands are places that have been altered with long-term development (including downhill ski areas and large dams). In these areas, human activities have created lasting changes in the composition, structure, and function (ecological processes and disturbance agents) of the associated ecosystems. These areas, which often provide large socioeconomic benefits, include DMR and the McPhee Dam. Mineral development, mining, and alternative energy infrastructure is generally not compatible within MA 8 areas, e.g., within downhill ski areas and dams. See Table 3.5.7 for a list of allowable, restricted, and prohibited uses within MA 8.

Table 3.5.7: Management Area 8 Allowable Uses

| Activities and Uses | Allowable - Restricted - Prohibited |
|---|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Prohibited |
| Prescribed burning | Allowable |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Allowable |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Allowable |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Restricted |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Allowable |
| Livestock grazing | Restricted |
| Facilities | Allowable |
| Motorized (summer) | Allowable |
| Motorized (winter) | Allowable |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Allowable |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Allowable |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Restricted (stipulated with NSO to protect facilities) |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry per the 1872 Mining Law; however, MA 8 areas contain a provision for assessing the affected area for future mineral withdrawal and/or segregation) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Restricted (depending on location and resources present, restrictions may apply as identified in the LRMP standards and guidelines) |

3.6 Wilderness Areas and Wilderness Study Areas

Wilderness is a unique and vital resource. In addition to offering primitive recreation opportunities, it is valuable for its scientific and educational uses, as a benchmark for ecological studies, and for the preservation of historical and natural features.

The Wilderness Act of 1964 defines wilderness as:

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this chapter an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Federal agencies manage wilderness resources in a manner that ensures that their character and values are dominant and enduring. Wilderness management must be adapted over time in order to ensure their present and future availability and enjoyment as wilderness. Wilderness is managed in order to ensure that human influence does not impede the free play of natural forces or interfere with natural succession in the ecosystems, and to ensure that wilderness areas offer outstanding opportunities for solitude and/or for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Wilderness is also managed as one resource rather than a series of separate resources (FSM 2320.6).

There are four wilderness areas on USFS-administered lands, as well as the Piedra Area (USFS), which is a Congressionally designated area managed to preserve its wilderness characteristics (see Figure 3.6). Wilderness areas are managed by USFS policy outlined in FSM 2320. Specifically, the wilderness areas and the Piedra Area are managed under the San Juan-Rio Grande National Forests Wilderness Management Direction (USFS 1998a) that is incorporated by reference as part of this LRMP.

There is one WSA on USFS-administered lands within the planning area (see Figure 3.6). The Molas Pass WSA was transferred from BLM to USFS jurisdiction by the Hermosa Creek Watershed Protection legislation in 2014. This WSA was found to have wilderness characteristics during the original wilderness inventory that was conducted by BLM from 1978 to 1980 as directed by Section 603 of the FLPMA. This inventory focused on roadless areas of public lands of 5,000 acres or more, areas of less than 5,000 acres that had wilderness characteristics in association with contiguous roadless lands managed by another agency, and areas of less than 5,000 acres that had wilderness characteristics and could practicably be managed to keep those characteristics in an unimpaired condition.

The WSA was designated in the 1980s by BLM, and a final agency recommendation was forwarded to the President in 1991. Unless released by Congress from wilderness review, the WSA would be managed in accordance with FSM 1923.03, which directs that any area recommended for wilderness or wilderness study designation is not available for any use or activity that may reduce the wilderness potential of an area. The Forest Service will manage the WSA to protect its suitability for designation as wilderness.

If the WSA is released by Congress, it would be managed in accordance with the direction provided in the desired conditions below. See Table 3.6.1 for a listing of the existing wilderness areas, the Piedra Area, and WSAs.

Table 3.6.1: Wilderness Areas and Wilderness Study Areas

| Area Name and Type | Acres |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Wilderness Areas | |
| Weminuche | 328,850 |
| South San Juan | 71,804 |
| Lizard Head | 21,088 |
| Hermosa Creek | 37,378 |
| Total | 459,120 |
| Piedra Area | |
| | 60,534 |
| Wilderness Study Areas | |
| Molas Pass | 499 |
| Total | 499 |

Desired Conditions

3.6.1 WSAs released by Congress from wilderness review would be managed for existing values and uses, such as primitive and unconfined recreation, opportunities for solitude, naturalness, roadlessness, livestock grazing, forest resources, and biodiversity. The visual quality of WSAs released from wilderness review would be managed under the SIO class of adjacent public lands. Where more than one SIO class lies adjacent to a WSA, an interdisciplinary team would decide the SIO class of the released WSA.

Recommended Wilderness
San Juan National Forest
Figure 3.6

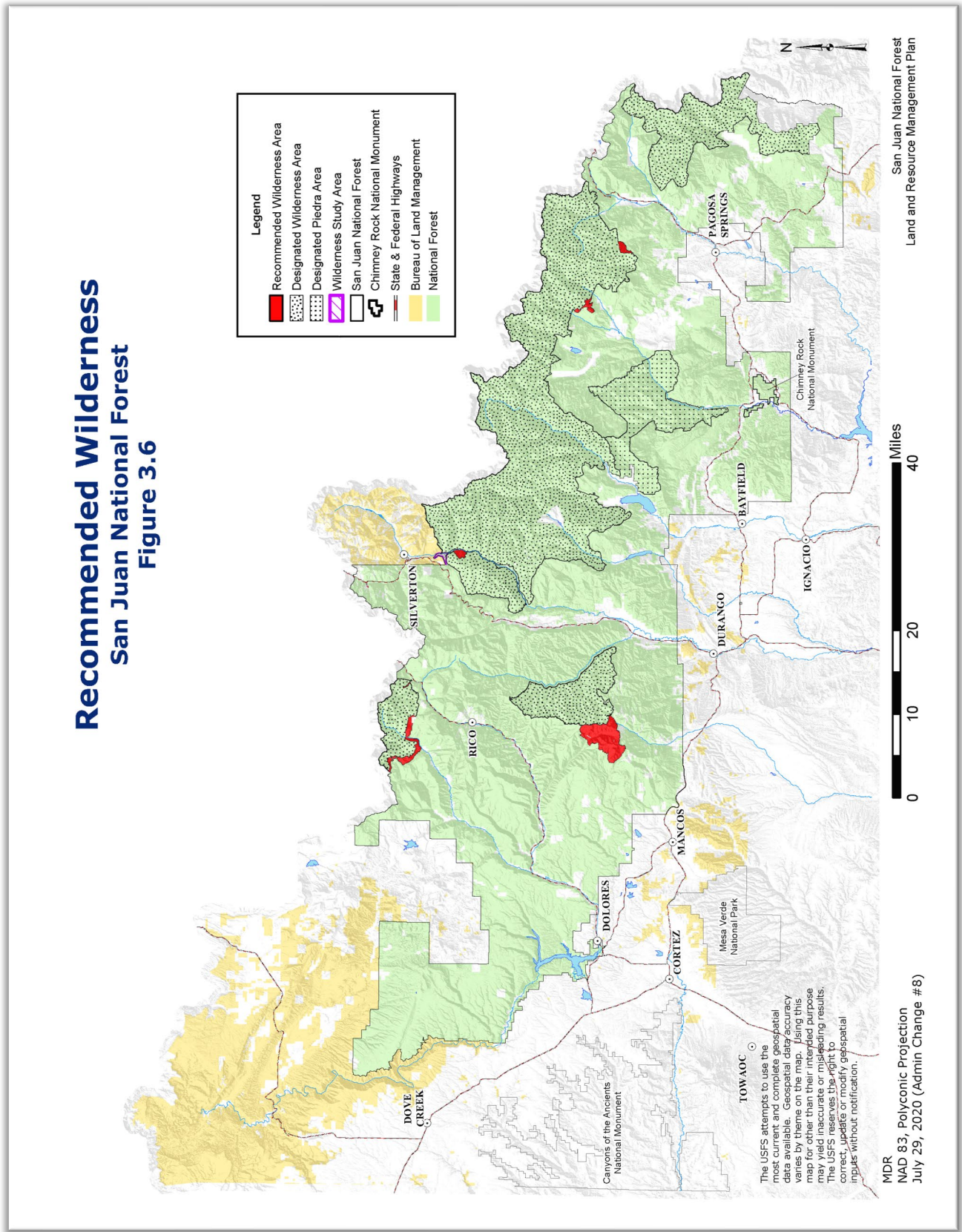


Figure 3.6: Recommended Wilderness

3.7 Recommended Wilderness

Using criteria from USFS directives, the SJNF used its inventory of roadless lands as part of the process for revising the LRMP to identify lands exhibiting “roadless character.” These areas were further examined to determine whether they possess wilderness characteristics using criteria from the Wilderness Act and FSH 1909.12. With regard to size, these areas must contain 5,000 or more acres, or they can contain less than 5,000 acres, but must be contiguous to existing wilderness areas or areas that are recommended for wilderness under other federal ownerships.

Twenty areas (totaling approximately 528,337 acres) are included in the SJNF inventory as having “roadless character.” These areas were analyzed for their potential inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System (see Appendix C). The SJNF recommends the following areas for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System (see Figure 3.6):

- portions of the Hermosa CRA (9,513 acres);
- portions of the Lizard Head CRA (2,628 acres);
- portions of the Weminuche Adjacent CRA (specifically, Elk Park and Monk Rock, totaling 1,346 acres); and
- portions of the Turkey Creek CRA (664 acres).

These areas will be managed to maintain their wilderness characteristics until Congress designates them as wilderness or releases them for other multiple-use management (in which case, they would be managed under MA 1).

3.8 Lands Managed for Wilderness Characteristics (Tres Rios Field Office)

This area was applicable only to BLM lands.

3.9 Wild and Scenic Rivers

Introduction

Congress enacted the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) in 1968 in order to preserve the free-flowing condition, water quality, and outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) of select rivers. The WSRA directs that each river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System be administered in a manner that protects and enhances its outstanding natural and cultural values. The WSRA allows existing uses of a river to continue and future uses to be considered (as long as the use does not conflict with the protection of river values).

WSRA Section 5(d)(1) directs federal agencies to consider the potential of all rivers and streams for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System during their planning processes. All streams and rivers within the planning area were assessed as to their WSR eligibility and suitability. The FEIS describes the process used for the planning area (also see Appendix D for additional details).

In order to be found suitable for WSR status, rivers must meet the following criteria:

- they must be free-flowing (not in a reservoir and having mostly natural banks);
- they must have at least one ORV (ORVs can be in relation to fish, wildlife, recreation, scenery, ecology, cultural, historic, and/or other resource);
- their free-flowing character, water quality, and ORVs should be protected, even if there are other competing uses; and
- their WSR status would be the best method for protecting their ORVs.

During the planning process, the SJNF determined the appropriate development level of rivers within the planning area. This was based on water resources development, shoreline development, and accessibility. These constitute a river’s classification as “wild,” “scenic,” or “recreation.” Table 3.9.1 lists the rivers that have been found to be suitable for WSR status (see also Figure 3.9).

The suitability determinations listed below are interim administrative recommendations that USFS may forward to the chief, Cabinet Department Secretaries, and the President for further review, possible modification, and transmission to the U.S. Congress for action. While these recommendations remain in this status, USFS can consider and pursue alternative management direction that may be recommended by other entities and/or individuals that provides appropriate river management and protection for the stream segments determined as suitable. Alternative management approaches that would affect the classification of river segments found suitable, impair or modify the identified outstandingly remarkable values, or alter the suitability determinations, would be subject to the appropriate environmental review and plan modification processes.

The identification of rivers as suitable through this land management planning process does not trigger any water rights or other protections under the WSRA. In order to manage the rivers for their potential inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic River System, existing authorities will be used to protect the identified river's free-flowing character, water quality, ORVs, and recommended classification (details of the interim protective management are listed in FSM 1990.12_80). Previous land management plans had similar direction and have provided protection for the ORVs of the Los Pinos River, and the Piedra River over the past several decades.

Table 3.9.1: Miles of River Segments Suitable for Wild and Scenic River Status by Class

| River Segment | Wild | Scenic | Recreation | Total |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Dolores River Total | | | 5.5 | 5.5 |
| FS segments McPhee to Bradfield Bridge | | | | |
| Animas R - Bakers Bridge to Sultan Creek | | | 27.19 | 27.19 |
| Mineral Creek | | | 8.65 | 8.65 |
| South Fork Mineral Creek | | | 7.41 | 7.41 |
| Animas River Totals | | | 43.25 | 43.25 |
| Big Bend Creek | 4.43 | | | 4.43 |
| Big Lick Creek | 0.76 | | | 0.76 |
| Clear Creek | | 5.36 | | 5.36 |
| Corral Creek | 1.65 | | | 1.65 |
| Deer Creek | 2.72 | | | 2.72 |
| East Fork Hermosa Creek | | | 6.70 | 6.70 |
| Elk Creek | 4.25 | | | 4.25 |
| Hermosa Creek | | 28.08 | | 28.08 |
| South Fork Hermosa Creek | 5.89 | | | 5.89 |
| West Cross Creek | 2.44 | | | 2.44 |
| Hermosa Creek Totals | 22.14 | 33.44 | 6.70 | 62.28 |
| Los Pinos, above Vallecito Reservoir | 21.77 | | | 21.77 |
| Lake Creek | 8.05 | | | 8.05 |
| Flint Creek | 7.03 | | | 7.03 |
| Sierra Vandera Creek | 3.67 | | | 3.67 |
| Snowslide Gulch | 3.51 | | | 3.51 |
| Rincon la Osa | 5.69 | | | 5.69 |
| Rincon la Vaca | 4.33 | | | 4.33 |
| Los Pinos Totals | 54.05 | | | 54.05 |
| Piedra River N of Hwy 160 | 14.09 | | 7.98 | 22.06 |
| East Fork Piedra River in Wilderness | 9.26 | | | 9.26 |
| Middle Fork Piedra River | 11.64 | | 7.66 | 19.30 |
| Piedra River Totals | 34.99 | | 15.64 | 50.63 |
| West Fork San Juan River | 8.50 | | 2.70 | 10.7 |
| East Fork San Juan River | | | 12.66 | 12.66 |
| San Juan River Totals | 8.48 | | 15.44 | 23.88 |

Suitable Wild and Scenic Rivers
San Juan National Forest
Figure 3.9

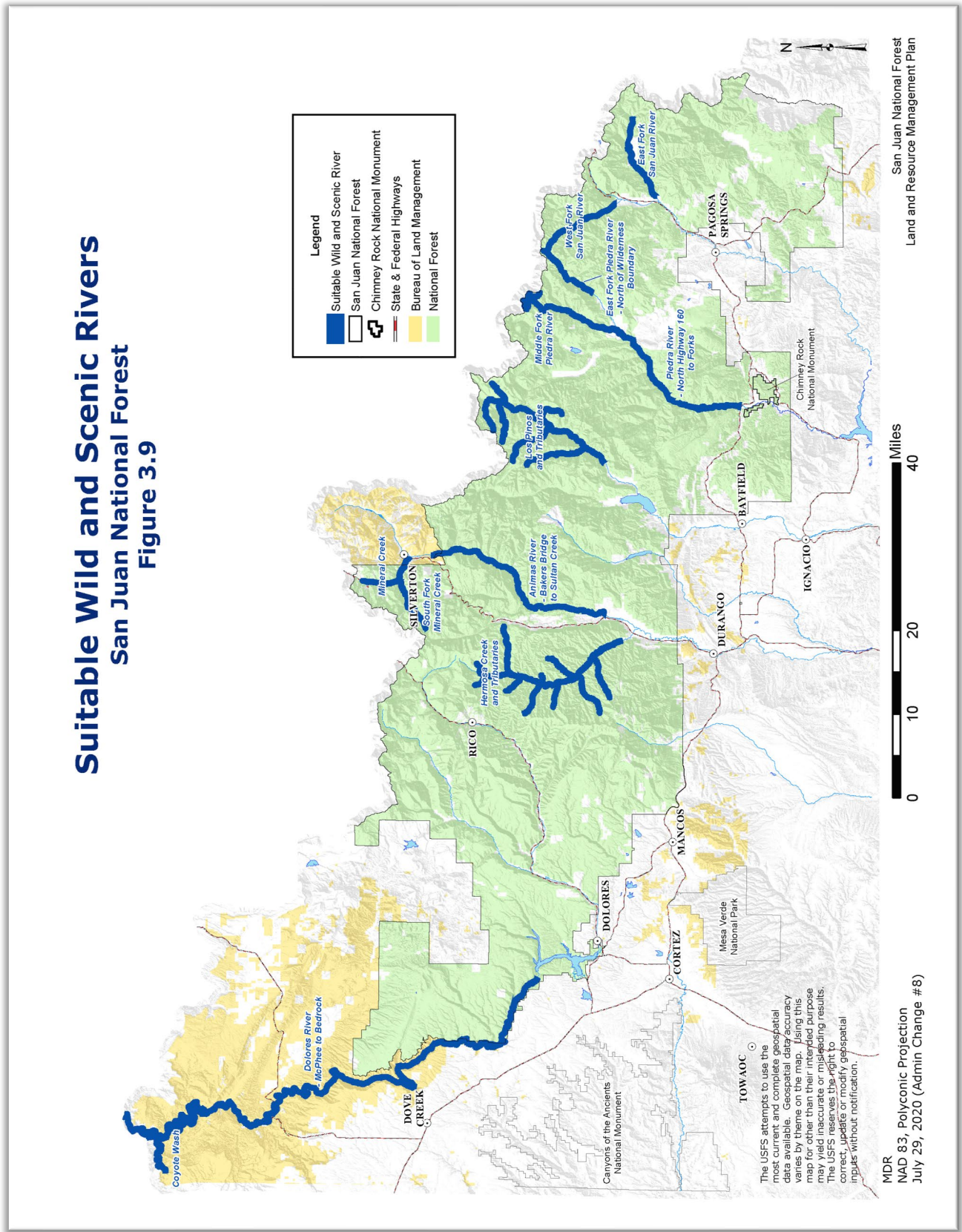


Figure 3.9: Suitable Wild and Scenic Rivers

3.10 Scenic, Historic, and Backcountry Byways

Introduction

Currently, driving for pleasure is one of the most popular forms of recreation within the planning area, with scenic byways and backcountry byways serving as some of the most popular routes. As the population increases, and as “Baby Boomers” grow older and become less able to engage in more physically active forms of recreation, larger numbers of visitors are anticipated to take up driving for pleasure. Heritage tourism, which is among the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry, is often combined with a scenic drive.

Consistent with the primary goals of the National Scenic Byway Program, SJNF managers will guide the appropriate physical development of these travel corridors and their associated facilities, direct the conservation of unique and valued attributes surrounding the planning area, and provide leadership for byway management that supports efforts to benefit these routes.

The planning area is home to the 232-mile-long San Juan Skyway, which was designated by the USFS as a National Scenic Byway in 1988 (also designated as a State Scenic and Historic Byway and as an All-American Road in 1997). The San Juan Skyway traverses some of the most spectacular, rugged, and pristine landscapes in America. The area is rich in culture—from prehistoric habitations to the colorful mining era that marked the San Juan Mountains in the 1800s (including the development of the narrow-gauge railways throughout the area).

The 65-mile-long Alpine Loop National Backcountry Byway passes through the southern San Juan Mountains (often along routes that follow ancient paths of Native Americans as they returned to their traditional summer hunting camps). This rugged route connects the towns of Lake City, Silverton, and Ouray. Spectacular high-elevation scenery and numerous historical markers explain the mining history of the area as the route travels through the towering San Juan Mountains.

The Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway highlights the long and intriguing inhabitation of the Four Corners region by Native Americans. It takes visitors to remote archeologically, culturally, and historically significant sites in Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. The section of the byway within the planning area travels mainly within the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (BLM), Hovenweep National Monument (National Park Service), Ute Mountain Ute tribal lands, and communities (including Cortez and Dolores). In total, 114 miles of this scenic byway are within Colorado.

The byway program provides some safety, information, and sanitary services; protects, conserves, and interprets valued resources; and promotes a quality image of the SJNF. Planning and infrastructure for these popular driving routes is not keeping up with the increasing demand for recreation. Inventorying scenic conditions along the three byways, as well as developing or updating corridor management plans and interpretive strategies, will help identify management priorities and actions designed to enhance the visitor experience. Travel management planning will integrate effectively with the management of these byways.

SJNF managers will participate in partnerships with local communities, businesses, governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations and other interested groups and individuals to manage, develop, preserve and interpret these nationally significant routes, which have become destinations unto themselves. Potential projects should promote stewardship and ultimately provide benefits to local economies.

Desired Conditions

- 3.10.1 The byways are the main access routes, or gateways, to a wide array of recreation opportunities within the planning area; they have appropriate public information and services.
- 3.10.2 Important cultural, historic and agricultural heritage sites along these three byways (including early historic mining, ranching, and Native American sites) are interpreted.

- 3.10.3 Scenic byways and adjacent landscapes provide high-quality scenery. Viewsheds along scenic byways are protected, and scenic integrity is maintained in order to meet the public's desire for attractive natural landscapes. The byways contribute to recreation tourism and the regional economy. The byways are managed in order to protect the intrinsic qualities for which they were designated, consistent with current corridor management plans.
- 3.10.4 Each byway corridor management plan (the community-based strategy to balance the conservation of the byway corridors' intrinsic qualities with the use and enjoyment of those same resources) is up-to-date, having been developed with participation from a variety of stakeholders interested in preserving and enhancing the scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archeological and recreational resource qualities of the byway.
- 3.10.5 Byway goals and objectives for the effectively integrated with the applicable agency recreation facility master plan.
- 3.10.6 Byway goals and objectives are considered when actions are taken that could impact the byway.
- 3.10.7 Significant historic structures along these three byways are preserved and stabilized.

Additional Guidance

- San Juan Skyway Corridor Management Plan (Friends of the San Juan Skyway Association 1995)
- Trail of the Ancients Corridor Management Plan (Mesa Verde County 2001)

3.11 National Recreation and Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails

Introduction

National recreation and scenic trails are federally recognized trails that connect people to local resources and improve their quality of life. More than 900 trails have been designated throughout the nation. There are two designated national recreation and scenic trails within the planning area: the Calico National Recreation Trail and the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. A master plan for the Colorado Trail was signed in 1998 and all three trails are recognized through establishment reports and management plans for their scenic, historic, interpretive, and recreation values.

The Old Spanish National Historic Trail also briefly crosses through the USFS planning area. Authorized by Congress in December 2002, the Old Spanish National Historic Trail commemorates the first overland link from Santa Fe to California. While the Old Spanish Trail is currently mapped as crossing the planning area, very few localities associated with the trail have actually been identified and ground-truthed.

Trail stewardship is emphasized through partnerships, marketing and interpretation, monitoring efforts, and maintaining and enhancing desired conditions.

The key to sustaining a successful network of national recreation and scenic trails, and national historic trails, is to continue to engage partners (including the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Alliance and the Colorado Trail Foundation) and effective trail stewardship (including reconstruction, relocation, monitoring, volunteer recruitment and training, signage, and production of educational materials). Regular reviews of the partnership agreements between the SJNF and partners will help ensure clear role definition for the management and operation of these trails. Coordination with adjoining USFS- and BLM-administered lands that also contain the Continental National Divide Scenic Trail and the Colorado Trail is also an important element of successful trail management and interpretation.

Marketing emphasis includes ensuring that all trailheads and trails have essential safety, orientation, and regulatory signs that are consistent with the natural setting of the trail. Marketing efforts also include the dissemination of accurate information regarding these trails to the public in an effective manner through a variety of media and venues (including the SJNF websites, guidebooks, brochures, and visitor centers).

Desired Conditions

- 3.11.1 Consistent with their designation, the significant scenic, historic, recreation and natural resources for each trail are identified, interpreted, and protected. The values for which these trails were established are retained.
- 3.11.2 The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Colorado Trail provide opportunities for remote backcountry recreation, challenge, and solitude, except where they come near area communities (where more people and development may be encountered).
- 3.11.3 The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Colorado Trail are non-motorized trails and have high scenic integrity.
- 3.11.4 Interpretive venues are used to inform and educate visitors about the national recreation and scenic trails, as well as about resource stewardship.
- 3.11.5 Trail segments near area communities and/or major access points are planned and designed in order to be barrier-free.
- 3.11.6 Partnerships are encouraged and expanded in order to provide identification, documentation, monitoring, protection, preservation, education, research, and interpretation.
- 3.11.7 Interpretive displays, visitor contacts, and brochures are available to help visitors and employees understand and appreciate the heritage and cultural resources associated with the SJNF. A wide range of heritage activities, experiences, and products (both on-site and off-site) are available for visitor enjoyment and education. Off-site activities include museum displays, brochures, audio programs, classroom presentations, and field trips. Public access and interpretive efforts are compatible with the physical, cultural, and recreational settings and values of the resources.

Objectives

- 3.11.8 Over the life of the LRMP, partner with the Old Spanish Trail Association to ground truth the location of the segment of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail on the SJNF.
- 3.11.9 Over the life of the LRMP, develop at least one interpretive product in partnership with the Old Spanish Trail Association that interprets the Old Spanish National Historic Trail within the planning area.
- 3.11.10 Over the life of the LRMP, inventory high potential historic sites and trail routes of the Old Spanish Trail, develop a national trail management corridor, and establish goals and objectives for national trails.

Guidelines

- 3.11.11 Other resource activities should be designed in order to meet scenic quality objectives for these special designation trails (generally, a foreground and middle-ground of very high to high scenic integrity).
- 3.11.12 **Old Spanish National Historic Trail:** A literature search and/or Class III cultural resources survey should be conducted within 0.5 mile of either side of the centerline of the congressionally designated Old Spanish National Historic Trail in high potential segments, prior to authorization of

ground-disturbing activities or activities that could substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail.

Additional Guidance

- Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan (USFS 2009c)
- USFS Decision Notice, Colorado Trail Management Direction and Route Selection EA, Region 2 (USFS 1998b)
- USFS Master Plan for the Colorado Trail (USFS 1998c)
- FSM 2300, Chapter 2353, National Scenic and Historic Trails (USFS 2009d)
- Public Law 90-543, National Trails System Act of 1968, as amended 2002, (this amendment created the Old Spanish National Historic Trail)
- Old Spanish Trail National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment (National Park Service 2001)
- Calico Trail Establishment Report (USFS 1979)

3.12 Research Natural Areas

RNAs are national forest lands designated in perpetuity for non-manipulative research and education, and for the preservation of biodiversity. They are part of a long-term national network of ecological reserves managed to allow natural ecological processes to proceed with minimum human intervention. RNAs represent relatively natural, unaltered ecosystems that serve as reference areas to assess the consequences of management actions on similar lands.

Desired conditions and objectives in the LRMP apply to RNAs in general. Specific desired conditions and objectives for individual RNAs recommended through the revised LRMP will be developed when the management plans for individual RNAs are developed. Table 3.12.1 lists existing RNAs and those that are recommended through this LRMP, as well as key features of each area. Figure 3.12 displays the location of the RNAs.

Table 3.12.1: Existing and New Research Natural Areas on San Juan National Forest Lands

| RNA | Key Features |
|-----------------|---|
| Narraguinnep* | Old growth ponderosa pine forests, canyon topography |
| Williams Creek* | White fir-dominated cool-moist mixed conifer forests |
| Electra | Glacial topography, old growth ponderosa pine forests |
| Grizzly Peak | Alpine, fens, willow carrs |
| Hermosa | Ponderosa pine forests, mixed conifer forests, aspen forests, spruce-fir forests, wetlands, Thurber fescue grasslands |
| Hidden Mesas | Old growth ponderosa pine forests, mesa topography |
| Martinez Creek | Old growth spruce-fir forests unburned for centuries |
| Navajo River | Thurber fescue grasslands, volcanic geology, Colorado cutthroat trout, riparian areas |
| Piedra | Old-growth mixed conifer forests |
| Porphyry Gulch | Alpine, spruce-fir forests, wetlands |
| * Existing RNA. | |

Desired Conditions

3.12.1 Natural ecological processes (including succession, fire, insects, diseases, and flooding) are mostly unaltered by humans and shape the composition, structure, function, and landscape pattern of the vegetation.

3.12.2 Non-native species are absent or rare.

3.12.3 Human influence and structures are absent or rare.

Objectives

3.12.4 Within 4 years, complete the management plans and establishment records for all the newly designated RNAs on SJNF lands.

3.12.5 Within 4 years, revise the management plans for the Narraguinnep and Williams Creek RNAs.

Table 3.12.2: Research Natural Area Allowable Uses

| Management Activities and Uses | Allowable - Prohibited - Restricted |
|---|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Allowable |
| Prescribed burning | Restricted (may be used to meet desired conditions) |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Prohibited |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Prohibited |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Prohibited |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Prohibited |
| Livestock grazing | Restricted (may be used to meet desired conditions) |
| Facilities | Prohibited |
| Motorized (summer) | Prohibited |
| Motorized (winter) | Prohibited |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Prohibited |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Prohibited |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Restricted, NSO |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry, but impacts to natural resource must be minimized; the agency can petition for the area to be withdrawn from mineral entry) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Prohibited |

Research Natural Areas
San Juan National Forest
Figure 3.12

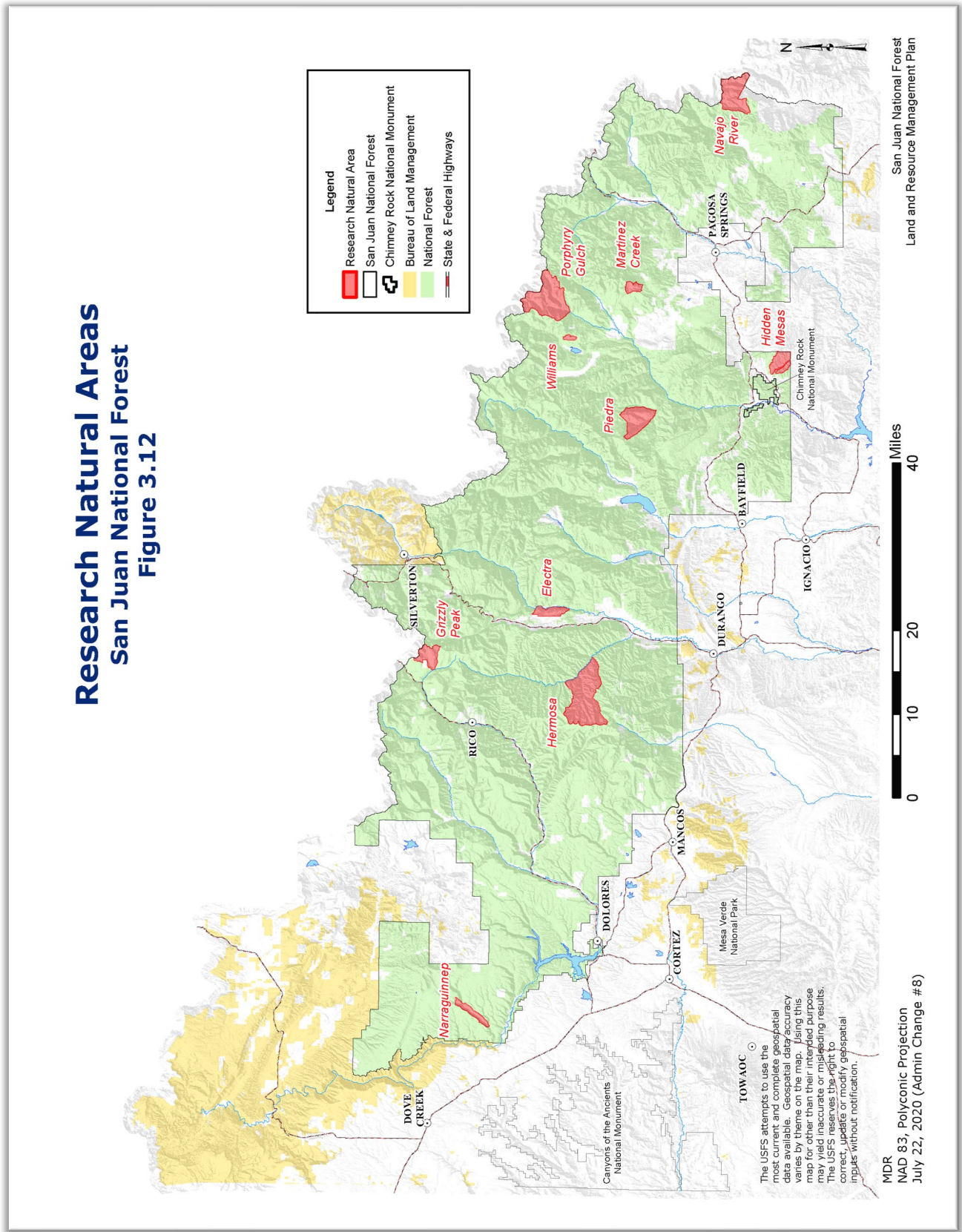


Figure 3.12: Research Natural Areas

3.13 Gypsum Valley Area of Critical Environmental Concern (Tres Rios Field Office)

This area was applicable only to BLM lands.

3.14 Anasazi Culture Area of Critical Environmental Concern (Tres Rios Field Office)

This area was applicable only to BLM lands.

3.15 Mesa Verde Escarpment (Tres Rios Field Office)

This area was applicable only to BLM lands.

3.16 Falls Creek Archeological Area

Falls Creek Valley may contain archeological resources that could aid in efforts to study the earliest agricultural and sedentary societies in the southwestern United States. The area is an important and highly valued place for Native Americans, who view it as part of their heritage. The Falls Creek Archeological Area contains one of the earliest and best dated Basketmaker II sites ever documented. In 1988 the SJNF designated the area as the Falls Creek Archaeological Special Interest Area. These sites are preserved and protected for their scientific, educational, social, and cultural values.

The west side of the Falls Creek Archaeological Area is currently closed to the public; however, the area east of the road is frequented on a year-round, daily basis by residents and visitors taking advantage of the close proximity to Durango in order to enjoy the scenic beauty, open space, and recreational opportunities (Figure 3.27.2). The historic landscape, including the irrigated hayfields of the Hidden Valley Ranch, is managed by the SJNF. The Hidden Valley Ranch provides a window into the area's ranching heritage (offering one of the only hayfields open to public recreation anywhere in the region). These fields are managed in order to provide nutritious forage for big game dependent on this mild, southern exposure lowland for winter habitat. This area has been managed by the USFS as critical big game winter range since the land was acquired by the SJNF in 1985.

The Falls Creek Archaeological Area will continue to emphasize protection and preservation of significant archaeological deposits, wildlife diversity and maintenance of critical big game winter habitat, and compatible non-motorized recreational opportunities.

Desired Conditions

- 3.16.1 Archeological sites are protected and preserved for their scientific, educational, social, and cultural values.
- 3.16.2 Native American values are respected and preserved, and tribal members are provided special access to the area.
- 3.16.3 Access to the Falls Creek Rock Shelter is allowed to educational institutions through a special use permit.
- 3.16.4 Historic viewsheds (including the historic hayfields) are protected, enhanced, and preserved.
- 3.16.5 Native American tribes and Pueblos are consulted with regard to the development of appropriate off-site educational materials.

- 3.16.6 NAGPRA repatriation of items removed during the 1930s excavation is completed (including analysis of these items necessary in order to complete the cultural affiliation study).
- 3.16.7 The area continues to provide critical big game winter range habitat.
- 3.16.8 Wetlands are managed in order to retain the floral and faunal diversity that currently exists.

Objectives

- 3.16.9 Within 5 years, create a dispersed recreation plan that is congruent with desired conditions and that would be incorporated into the LRMP for the Falls Creek Archeological Area.
- 3.16.10 Within 1 year, implement a site-steward program.
- 3.16.11 Within 5 years, develop and implement a rock art preservation plan in order to mitigate deterioration.
- 3.16.12 Within 5 years, develop appropriate and sensitive off-site interpretive and educational materials. Make the information from the collection analyses available to researchers.

Table 3.16.1 shows the allowable, prohibited, and restricted management activities and uses for the Falls Creek Archeological Area.

Table 3.16.1: Falls Creek Archeological Area Allowable Uses

| Management Activities and Uses | Allowable - Prohibited - Restricted |
|---|--|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Restricted in order to protect significant archaeological resources |
| Prescribed burning | Restricted (archaeological and historic resources must be protected from impacts from fire) |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Restricted (archeological and historic resources must be protected) |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Restricted (archeological and historic resources must be protected) |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Prohibited |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Restricted to minimize impacts to archeological resources and protect viewshed |
| Livestock grazing | Prohibited |
| Facilities | Restricted to interpretive/informational signs, trailheads, and trails |
| Motorized (summer) | Restricted to designated roads and trails |
| Motorized (winter) | Restricted |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Restricted |
| Mechanical transport | Restricted to designated roads and trails |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Prohibited |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Administratively not available |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry, but impacts to archaeological resource must be minimized; the agency can petition for the area to be withdrawn from mineral entry) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Prohibited |

3.17 Chimney Rock National Monument

Introduction

The Chimney Rock National Monument is a treasure in the public lands' system, containing spiritual, historic, and scientific resources of great value and significance. The site is recognized as an important archaeological resource dating to the Pueblo II era (roughly 900 -1150 A.D.). Within the Monument boundaries, 167 sites and structures have been identified, and many more are believed to exist. In addition to being the northeastern-most Chacoan outlier, the site is recognized as one of North America's foremost archaeoastronomy resources. Many native people hold Chimney Rock to be an important place of cultural continuity. In addition to the significant archaeological and archaeoastronomical characteristics, the site also includes significant visual and landscape characteristics, geological and biological features, as well as objects of deep cultural and educational value. It is a living landscape that shapes those who visit it and brings people together across time.

The site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, and is one of thirty-nine Chaco Culture Archaeological Protection Sites designated under the Chacoan Outliers Protection Act of 1995. Because of the great value and significance of the spiritual, historic, and scientific resources of this site, Chimney Rock was declared a national monument by Presidential Proclamation Number 8868 on September 21, 2012.

The proclamation required a management plan be written for the Monument and directs that the management plan ...

"...provide for protection and interpretation of the scientific and historic objects identified [in the proclamation], and continued public access to those objects, consistent with their protection. The plan will protect and preserve access by tribal members for traditional cultural, spiritual, and food- and medicine-gathering purposes, consistent with the purposes of the Monument, to the maximum extent permitted by law."

The scientific and historic objects identified in the proclamation (referred to as the "objects of the Monument) which are the focus of management within the Monument include:

- **Cultural Resources** – The Chimney Rock site contains nationally significant archaeological sites, with a total of 167 known prehistoric sites and structures within eight major site groups, or communities, including the highest Chacoan "great house" in the Southwest occurring at an elevation of 7,600 feet. The Chimney Rock site is also one of the best recognized archaeoastronomy resources in North America, with virtually all building clusters having views of Chimney Rock and Companion Rock which frame multiple astronomical alignments and illustrate the Ancestral Pueblo People's knowledge of astronomy.
- **Cultural Values** – The Chimney Rock area holds deep spiritual significance for modern pueblo and tribal communities. Descendants of the Ancestral Puebloans return to this important place of cultural continuity for ceremonial and traditional purposes. The area also contributes to our knowledge about the Ancestral Pueblo People and their understanding and command of their environment, and affords opportunities to understand how geology, ecology, and archaeology interrelate. The features of the Monument also provide recreation opportunities to visitors from near and far.
- **Visual and Landscape Characteristics** – The two soaring rock pinnacles, Chimney Rock and Companion Rock, dominate the dramatic landscape of the Monument, rising hundreds of feet from the valley floor to an elevation of 7,900 feet. The ridgeline leading to the rock pinnacles and the Peterson Ridge area both offer spectacular views of the Monument and surrounding landscape.

- **Biological Features** – Biological features are also significant landscape characteristics and include wildlife species such as peregrine falcons that nest on Companion Rock, mule deer and elk that migrate through the area each fall and spring and live there during the critical winter months, as well as the many other wildlife species and habitats present in the Monument. The diversity of vegetation within the Monument, ranging from ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests to desert grasslands and rare cactus species, are also important objects of the Monument.
- **Economic Opportunities** – The lands within the Monument are part of a larger area that helps support a growing travel and tourism sector that is a source of economic opportunity for surrounding communities, especially businesses in the region. This helps attract new residents, retirees, and businesses that will further diversify the local economy.

The resource direction contained in Chapter 2 of this LRMP will continue to apply within the Monument unless specifically noted. Where the resource direction found in Chapter 2 of the LRMP has been amended for the Chimney Rock National Monument, these changes will be noted in each resource section below. In addition, plan components designed specifically to address the Chimney Rock National Monument will be adopted. These plan components are listed below.

The vicinity map in Figure 3.17.1 displays the location of the Monument relative to its location within the San Juan National Forest. Figure 3.17.2 is a map of the Monument.

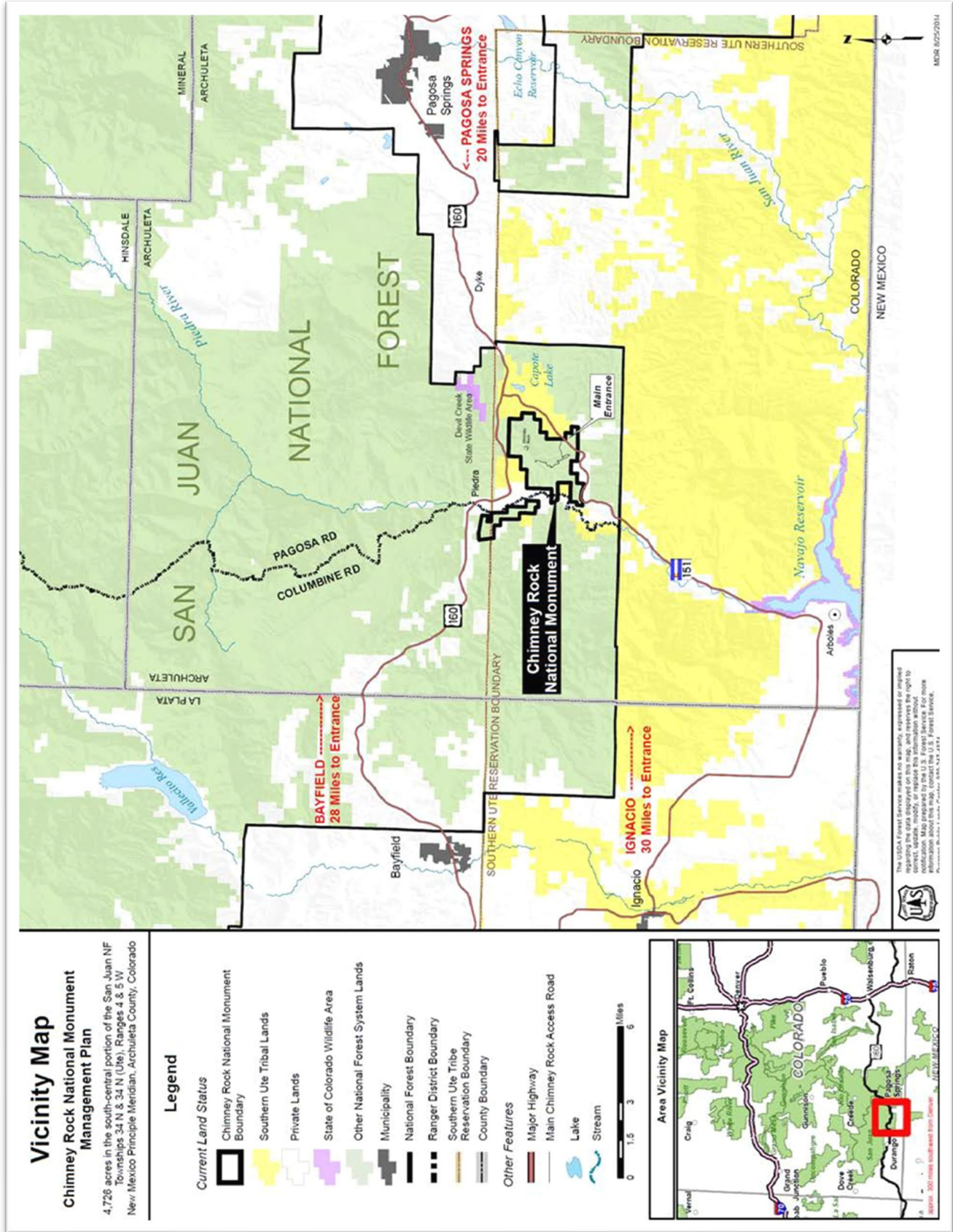


Figure 3.17.1: CRNM Vicinity Map

3.17 Chimney Rock National Monument

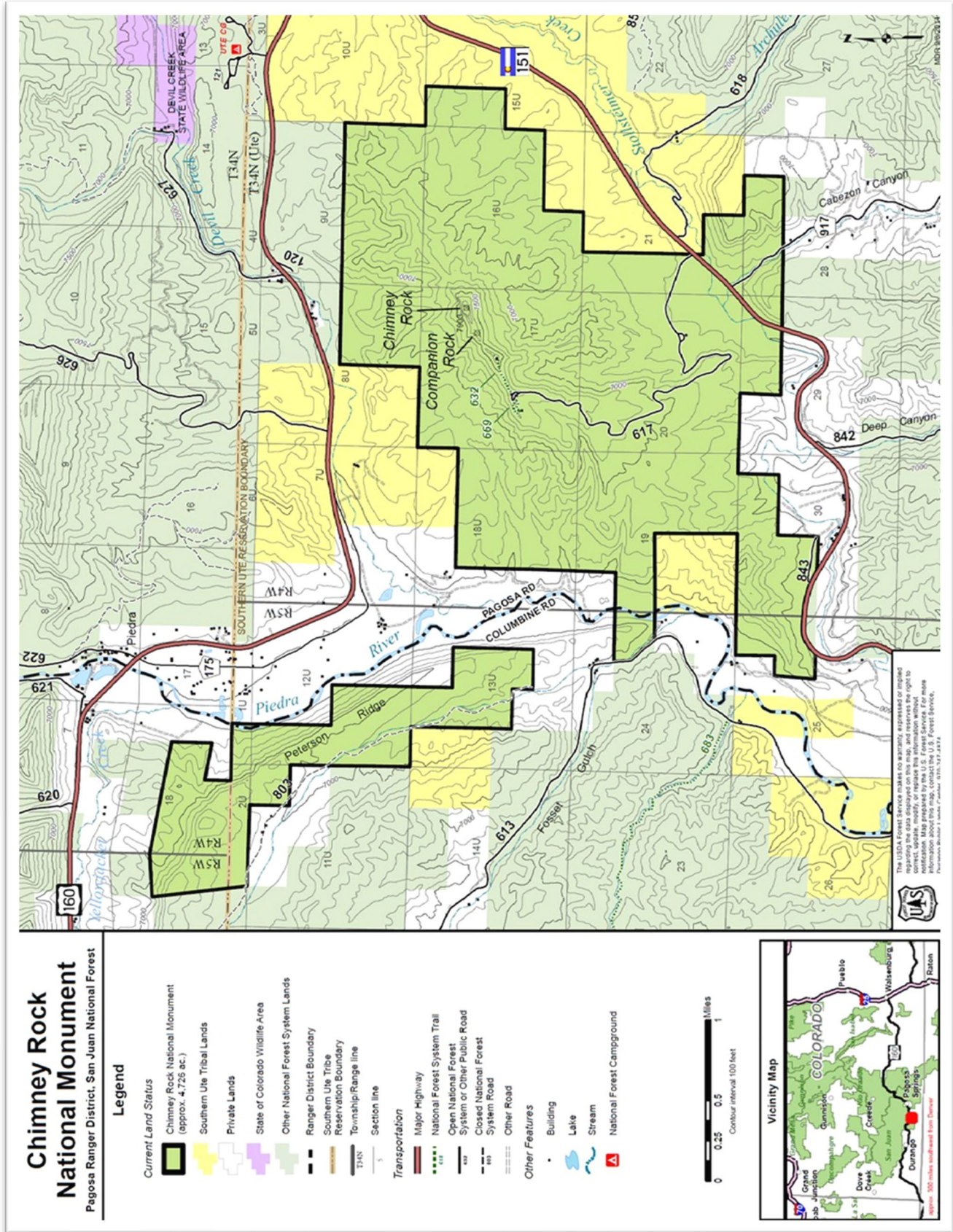


Figure 3.17.2: Chimney Rock National Monument Boundary

CRNM Cultural Resources

The nationally significant archaeology, archaeoastronomy, and objects of deep cultural and educational value are among the primary reasons that the Chimney Rock area was designated as a National Monument. The site offers a valuable window into the cultural developments of the Pueblo II era and affords opportunities to understand how geology, ecology, and archaeology interrelate. Maintaining and developing partnerships will be critical for preserving, interpreting, and better understanding Chimney Rock National Monument. Partnerships with tribes, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Chaco Interagency Management Group, the University of Colorado, History Colorado, and other research and preservation organizations have been, and will continue to be, essential to this effort.

All desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines related to cultural resources in Section 2.16 will continue to apply within the Monument. In addition, plan components designed specifically to address heritage and cultural resources within the Monument will be adopted. These additional plan components focus on the conservation and proper treatment of cultural and ethnographic resources of the Monument, and conserving the viewsheds, night sky, and auditory environments that contribute to cultural values and archaeoastronomy resources of the Monument.

Ethnographic resources are objects and places, including sites, structures, landscapes, and natural resources, with traditional cultural meaning and value to associated peoples. Research and consultation with associated people identifies and explains the places and things they find culturally meaningful. Ethnographic resources may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as traditional cultural properties.

Desired Conditions

- 3.17.1 Cultural and ethnographic resources within the Monument are preserved and protected in a manner that ensures long-term stewardship of these resources and sustainable public benefits.
- 3.17.2 Cultural resources in the Monument are managed on a landscape level and the cultural values provided by the viewsheds, night sky, and auditory environment are maintained.
- 3.17.3 Archaeological and ethnographic research and tribal consultation provide for a better understanding, appreciation, interpretation, and management of the Monument.
- 3.17.4 Partnerships provide opportunities for research, interpretation, and sustainable tourism at the Monument.
- 3.17.5 Visitors respect and leave archaeological resources and tribal offerings undisturbed.

Objectives

- 3.17.6 Over the life of the plan, conduct inventories for and oversee research about archaeological, historical, and ethnographic resources to better understand and manage the resources.
- 3.17.7 Over the life of the plan, pursue partnerships and opportunities for grant funding for archaeological and ethnographic research and interpretation at the Monument.
- 3.17.8 Within 10 years, prioritize sites at the Monument for public interpretation, research, stabilization, conservation, and/or traditional uses.
- 3.17.9 Within five years, implement a monitoring plan for cultural resources that evaluates factors such as cultural resource use-allocation, National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) status, public use patterns, vandalism occurrences, vulnerability and cultural sensitivity.
- 3.17.10 Within five years, design and implement archaeological site hardening along the trail to the Great House and other areas as needed.

Standards

- 3.17.11 Activities that occur within the Monument must be conducted in a manner that limits visual, auditory, and night sky impacts to help preserve the cultural and traditional values associated with the Monument.
- 3.17.12 All new ground-disturbing activity within 300 feet of an eligible, contributing, or unevaluated site must be reviewed and/or monitored by a qualified archaeologist.
- 3.17.13 If unidentified cultural resources are discovered during project activities within the Monument, activities must be halted and a Forest Service archaeologist notified before project activities may proceed. This includes, but is not limited to, the discovery of human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, objects of cultural patrimony, and/or archaeological artifacts or deposits.
- 3.17.14 Employees, permittees, volunteers, contractors, and subcontractors must be informed of their responsibilities regarding 1) protective measures for cultural resources; 2) the maintenance of confidentiality of archaeological site location information; and 3) the requirement that any disturbance to, defacement of, or collection or removal of archaeological, historic, or sacred material is not legal without proper authorization and permit.

Guidelines

- 3.17.15 Archaeological excavations should be designed to avoid or minimize potential impacts to human remains. If human remains are encountered, they will be treated in accordance with the San Juan National Forest Discovery Plan.
- 3.17.16 Excavations at archaeological sites should be backfilled, including excavations at prehistoric architectural sites. The Great House (5AA083), Parking Lot Site (5AA086), Ravine Site/Great Kiva (5AA088) sites should be the only prehistoric architectural sites that are left open/stabilized and maintained for intensive visitation. No additional prehistoric architectural sites should be left open to the elements, developed, stabilized and/or maintained for intensive visitation.
- 3.17.17 Proposed projects should be designed or modified so that significant cultural resources are avoided, and so that the determination of effect for the undertaking is either “no historic properties affected,” or “no adverse effect”.
- 3.17.18 Ground disturbing activities within 300 feet from the boundaries of identified eligible or unevaluated cultural sites should be avoided unless the purpose is to protect the cultural site. Give consideration when setting the buffer to the importance of setting, context, and natural topographic barriers in managing and preserving heritage and traditional values of particular sites and settlement clusters.
- 3.17.19 Wherever possible, facilities within the Monument should be located in previously disturbed or existing developed areas to help limit impacts to cultural and ethnographic resources.
- 3.17.20 New facilities should be located in areas that blend with cultural landscapes and should be designed and located in a manner that does not negatively impact ethnographic resources.
- 3.17.21 Archaeological sites should be closed to public access if damage occurs that cannot be mitigated.
- 3.17.22 Sites that are experiencing vandalism or damage from other sources (such as erosion) should be considered high priority for mitigation, which could include research. Research on such sites should be designed to recover remaining information potential, especially when physical in-place preservation or conservation may not be feasible over the long term.

CRNM Tribal Interests

The Chimney Rock area holds deep spiritual significance for modern pueblo and tribal communities. Today, descendants of the Ancestral Puebloans return to this important place of cultural continuity for ceremonial and traditional purposes. The area is also an important source of traditional cultural materials that are

collected by tribal members for food and medicine. The proclamation requires the management plan to protect and preserve access by tribal members for traditional cultural, spiritual, and food and medicine gathering purposes, consistent with the purposes of the Monument, to the maximum extent permitted by law. Nothing in the proclamation, the LRMP, or the Chimney Rock Management Plan shall be deemed to enlarge or diminish the rights of any Indian tribe.

In addition to the desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines for other resources listed in this management plan, plan components designed specifically to address tribal interests within the Monument will also be adopted. These additional plan components focus on consulting with tribes, protecting resources important to tribes, and providing access to these resources.

In addition to the LRMP and the plan components listed below, the SJNF will continue to ensure that the hunting rights of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe within the exterior boundaries of the Southern Ute Indian Reservation, including lands within the Monument, are upheld. The SJNF will also continue to ensure that the hunting and fishing rights of the 1873 Brunot Agreement are upheld on public lands under their management jurisdiction, including those lands within the Monument.

Desired Conditions

- 3.17.23 Tribal access to the Monument for ceremonial, traditional cultural, and food and medicine gathering purposes is protected and encouraged.
- 3.17.24 Tribal traditions are valued by the Forest Service and the public. When appropriate, these traditions are incorporated into the interpretation of the Monument to help provide visitor experiences that foster cultural understanding. Tribes are encouraged to participate in the development of interpretive materials and to assist in the training of tour guides/interpreters.
- 3.17.25 Tribal consultation regarding management, interpretation, traditional uses and other issues of tribal concern within the Monument is an on-going process and is fostered to maintain open communication with tribes.

Objectives

- 3.17.26 Within two years, produce an ethnographic study and tribal oral history of the Chimney Rock area.
- 3.17.27 Within five years, develop a policy in consultation with the tribes that specifies how traditional food and medicine gathering will occur within the Monument.
- 3.17.28 Conduct annual tribal consultation meetings regarding the Monument and provide additional opportunities to consult throughout the year.

Standards

- 3.17.29 Projects must be designed or modified so that negative impacts to areas with high value for traditional/ceremonial uses, and food and medicine gathering uses are avoided or mitigated.
- 3.17.30 When possible, inadvertent discoveries of human remains will be reburied in situ, with only the minimum amount of disturbance/non-destructive analysis necessary to determine whether it is a forensic case and to determine cultural affiliation. If reburial in place is not possible, reburial in a secure location must occur as close to the original burial location as possible. Potential reburial locations will be identified through tribal consultation.

Guidelines

- 3.17.31 Tribal requests to gather forest products within the Monument for traditional, non-commercial use should be considered as priority use as long as the collecting of such materials does not result in damage to the objects of the Monument or resource degradation.

CRNM Recreation

As stated in the proclamation, the Monument is part of a larger area that supports a growing travel and tourism sector that is a source of economic opportunity for the communities and businesses in the region. Visitors are drawn to the area's archaeological sites, outstanding and diverse scenery, and the interpretive and educational opportunities offered at the Monument. Recreational visitation to the Chimney Rock area has increased over time, as have amenities designed to accommodate the increased visitation and improve visitor experiences.

The Chimney Rock area of the Monument has a Summer Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) of Roaded Natural; the Peterson Mesa area is classified as Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized. The Winter ROS for the entire Monument is semi-primitive, non-motorized. The Monument will continue to be managed to maintain the current ROS. All desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines in the Recreation Section at 2.14 and the Interpretation and Conservation Education Section at 2.22 in the LRMP will continue to apply within the Monument. In addition, plan components designed specifically to address the recreation environment, interpretation, and conservation education within the Monument will be adopted. These additional plan components focus on providing increased visitor and interpretive services while still providing for the protection of the other objects of the Monument.

In addition to these plan components, the proclamation limits all motorized and mechanized vehicle use to designated roads, except for emergency or authorized administrative purposes.

Desired Conditions

- 3.17.32 Management of the Monument supports recreation and tourism activities without degradation to the objects of the Monument, thereby contributing to the local and regional economy.
- 3.17.33 Access to the Monument for recreational activities is managed and enabled in a manner that protects and provides for the enjoyment of the objects for which the Monument was created.
- 3.17.34 Public education and appreciation of the objects of the Monument are enhanced through the continuation and expansion of interpretive activities and environmental education opportunities. Through these interpretive and educational activities, visitors and other users learn about and gain respect and value for the objects of the Monument and the ongoing needs for protection and stewardship.
- 3.17.35 Interpretation and conservation education within the Monument are accomplished with a wide range of partners.
- 3.17.36 Management of visitor capacity and implementation of public safety measures considers visitor experiences and resource protection needs within the Monument.

Objectives

- 3.17.37 Within ten years, provide alternative opportunities to experience the objects of the Monument through the construction of additional non-motorized trails.
- 3.17.38 Within five years, design and implement public safety measures in the Monument, including along the trail to the Great House.
- 3.17.39 Within five years, develop a facilities management plan for the Monument.
- 3.17.40 Within three years, develop an interpretive plan and improve signage for the Monument.
- 3.17.41 Within one year of plan approval, issue closure orders prohibiting the following:
 - Prohibit rock climbing on Chimney Rock and Companion Rock by prohibiting public entry into the 3 acre area surrounding Chimney Rock and Companion Rock (shown in Figure 6 in the EIS).

- Prohibit over-snow vehicle use within the Monument.
- Prohibit horses and dogs (with the exception of service dogs) on the Great Kiva Trail (Trail #669) and the Great House Trail (Trail #632) and the archaeological sites accessed by these trails.

3.17.42 Conduct annual interpretive activities and environmental education programs to help inform the public about the archaeology, tribal traditions, unique landscape, diverse geology, natural processes, and flora and fauna of the Monument.

Standards

3.17.43 Motorized and mechanized vehicle use must be restricted to designated open roads except for emergencies or authorized administrative purposes.

3.17.44 Recreation special use permits shall only be issued when the proposed activity directly relates to and provides support for the protection and interpretation of the objects of the Monument.

Guidelines

3.17.45 Persons at one time (PAOT's) should be limited if visitation results in negative impacts to the objects of the Monument, safety concerns, or recurrent perceptions of crowding that cannot otherwise be mitigated.

CRNM Scenery and the Auditory Environment

The scenic vistas, night sky, and auditory environments are important objects of the Chimney Rock National Monument that draw tribal members and visitors to the site. The Monument possesses outstanding and diverse scenery as well as unique and significant archaeoastronomical alignments that are dependent on undisturbed views of the horizon and night sky from numerous points within the Monument. These sites and the associated landscape, viewshed, and night sky have significant traditional values for many pueblos and tribes. As a culturally significant and publicly interpreted site, the auditory environment of the Monument is also an important part of both the tribal member's and visitor's experience.

The Monument currently has a scenic integrity objective (SIO) of high in the main Chimney Rock area, and an SIO of low in the Peterson Mesa area. With implementation of this management plan, the entire Monument will be managed for an SIO of high. All desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines related to scenery in Section 2.15 of the LRMP will continue to apply within the Monument. In addition, plan components designed specifically to address scenery and the auditory environment within the Monument will be adopted. Plan components addressing the scenic and auditory environment are found in both the Cultural section and the Scenery and Auditory Environment Section of this Chapter, and focus on conserving the viewsheds, night sky, and auditory environments that occur within the Monument, as well as appropriately integrating facility and site development with the natural environment.

Impacts to scenic, night sky, and auditory resources will be considered during planning for all projects and activities within the Monument. The Scenery Management System inventory and the Built Environment Image Guide for the USFS will be validated and updated as a part of ongoing site-specific project and programmatic analysis.

Desired Conditions

3.17.46 All activities occurring in the Monument are managed in a manner that protects, enhances, or conserves the Monument's scenic and auditory resources.

3.17.47 Development of facilities and improvements within the Monument is done in a manner that is consistent with the character of the site, and does not detract from viewsheds, or the night sky and auditory environment.

Objectives

- 3.17.48 Over the life of the plan, document existing air quality conditions, including visibility. This could include photo documentation from key viewpoints or air quality data obtained from existing monitoring facilities in the region.
- 3.17.49 Within five years, develop design guidelines for the Chimney Rock National Monument based on the Built Environment Image Guide.

Standards

- 3.17.50 The Monument must be managed for a scenic integrity objective (SIO) of high, unless a decision (with supporting rationale) is made to deviate from the management guidance in a site-specific NEPA decision. *(Similar to LRMP standard 2.15.13, but changes the SIO on Peterson Ridge from low to high)*
- 3.17.51 New facilities and associated development must be located in areas where they will not detract from views of Chimney Rock, Companion Rock, or other significant cultural features or viewsheds within the Monument, and they must be designed to be consistent with the character of the site.
- 3.17.52 In order to preserve views of the night sky, the use of permanent lighting within the Monument must be minimized to only that needed for safe site operations. Light fixtures must be designed in a way to prevent horizontal and upward light pollution. *(Similar to LRMP guideline 2.15.24, but has been modified to become a standard)*

Guidelines

- 3.17.53 Activities that occur within the Monument should be conducted in a manner that limits auditory impacts in order to preserve the cultural values associated with the Monument.

CRNM Minerals and Geology

The geology of the Monument provides the foundation of the dramatic landscape setting and scenic vistas that are important objects of the Monument. The dominant geologic feature of the Monument is the pair of towering sandstone spires known as Chimney Rock and Companion Rock. The prominent ridgelines within the Monument served as the location for many of the structures built by the Ancestral Puebloans and command excellent vantage points from which to observe the surrounding landscape and the astronomical phenomena framed by Chimney Rock and Companion Rock. The Monument also contains mineral resources typical of the area such as oil, natural gas, coal, and saleable minerals.

Within the 4,726 acre Monument, 3,895 acres are under federal mineral ownership. The remaining 831 acres of the mineral estate are privately owned. All 3,895 acres under federal mineral ownership have been withdrawn from mineral entry by the proclamation in order to protect the objects of the Monument. However, 551 acres are part of a valid existing oil and gas lease that was issued prior to establishment of the Monument. The establishment of the Monument was subject to valid existing rights; the proclamation directs that development under existing oil and gas leases within the Monument be managed so as not to create any new impacts that would interfere with the proper care and management of the objects protected by the proclamation. The possibility also exists that the privately-owned mineral resources within the Monument may be developed at some point in the future, although to date there has been no stated interest in such development.

All desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines related to minerals in Section 2.19 of the LRMP will continue to apply within the Monument. In addition, plan components designed specifically to address minerals and geology within the Monument will be adopted. These additional plan components focus on protecting the objects of the Monument when managing valid existing rights and surface impacts from development of private minerals within the Monument, and the potential future acquisition of private mineral rights.

Desired Conditions

- 3.17.54 Management of mineral development subject to valid existing rights does not interfere with the proper care and management of the objects of the Monument.
- 3.17.55 Geologic processes continue to shape the landscape of the Monument.
- 3.17.56 All minerals within the Monument are federally owned or subject to non-surface disturbing agreements.

Objectives

- 3.17.57 Within five years, develop a strategy to move valid existing federal and private mineral rights within the Monument into non-surface disturbing status. This includes pursuing opportunities to acquire private mineral rights from willing sellers.

Standards

- 3.17.58 Development of valid existing federal mineral rights within the Monument shall be managed so as not to create any new impacts that would interfere with the proper care and management of the objects protected by the proclamation.
- 3.17.59 If non-federal minerals within the Monument are acquired by the federal government, these areas must be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry.

Guidelines

- 3.17.60 Geologic processes should be allowed to continue shaping the landscape of the Monument unless such processes would interfere with proper care and management of Monument objects, or would interfere with human health and safety.
- 3.17.61 Surface use within the Monument to develop private mineral rights should be mitigated to the extent practicable to minimize interference with proper care and management of Monument objects.
- 3.17.62 When offered by a willing entity, the federal government should acquire non-federal minerals within the Monument.

CRNM Terrestrial and Riparian Ecosystems

The diversity of vegetation within the Monument, ranging from ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests to desert grasslands and rare cactus species, are important objects of the Monument. The terrestrial and riparian ecosystems of the Monument contribute to scenic vistas, provide tribal members with traditional cultural materials, and provides important wildlife habitat for a diversity of species. Management of these ecosystems is a critical part of the sustainable ecosystems strategy, as described in Section 2.1 of the LRMP.

All desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines related to terrestrial ecosystems in Section

2.2 and riparian area and wetland ecosystems in Section 2.4 of the LRMP will continue to apply within the Monument. In addition, plan components designed specifically to address terrestrial and riparian ecosystems within the Monument will be adopted. These additional plan components focus on managing vegetation in a way that helps protect the cultural, historic, educational, and aesthetic values of the Monument. Emphasis is also placed on protecting traditional cultural materials within the Monument, and prioritizing restoration, fuels reduction, and habitat improvement projects.

Impacts to traditional cultural materials and special status plant species (federally listed and Forest Service sensitive species) will be considered during planning for all projects and activities within the Monument. In addition to the plan components listed below, the proclamation limits timber harvest and prescribed fire

within the Monument to only those projects needed to address the risk of wildfire, insect infestations, or disease that would endanger the Monument or imperil public safety.

Desired Conditions

- 3.17.63 Vegetative communities within the Monument from which traditional cultural materials are gathered are resilient and self-perpetuating.
- 3.17.64 Ground cover within the Monument is maintained at levels necessary to prevent accelerated rates of erosion and provide protection to archaeological sites and soils.
- 3.17.65 Vegetative features within the Monument that provide historic, cultural, educational, or aesthetic value are protected. Examples include protecting culturally scarred trees, fire scarred trees, or trees along trails or near cultural resources that provide shade and/or aesthetic value. It also includes protecting populations of plants that provide traditional cultural materials.

Objectives

- 3.17.66 Within ten years, prioritize where restoration, fuels treatment, or habitat improvement projects may be needed within the Monument, and where important traditional cultural materials collected by tribes are located.
- 3.17.67 Within five years, conduct an assessment of riparian health and stream channel stability along the portions of Stollsteimer Creek and the Piedra River within the Monument.
- 3.17.68 Within five years, complete one streambank restoration project on Stollsteimer Creek.
- 3.17.69 Within five years, restore one grassland site within the Monument disturbed by unauthorized uses.

Standards

- 3.17.70 Vegetation treatments must not result in fuel accumulations near cultural sites eligible or potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) except for limited-area, short-duration situations that will be mitigated soon after or as part of treatments.

Guidelines

- 3.17.71 Spraying of insecticides to inhibit or reduce the potential for tree mortality by insects should be undertaken only after consultation with, and support by, Region 2 Forest Health Protection Specialists.

CRNM Terrestrial Wildlife and Fisheries

The diversity of vegetation, geological formations, and the general location of the Monument provides habitat for many terrestrial and aquatic species including species of conservation concern, and species that are economically and socially important on the San Juan National Forest. Numerous species utilize habitat in the Monument year-round such as mule deer, Merriam's turkey, and golden eagle. Other species occupy the area seasonally such as migratory birds and bats that winter in southern latitudes and are present spring through summer. Some species such as peregrine falcon and white-throated swifts occupy the area because of the geological formations (rock spires) that provide important habitat for breeding. And finally, some species such as elk migrate to the area from higher elevations outside the Monument, or migrate from northern latitudes such as bald eagle, and reside in the Monument most of the winter. Large numbers of elk, bald eagles, and golden eagles present during winter attract the interest of local publics and visitors from outside the community. Management of terrestrial and aquatic species is a critical part of the sustainable ecosystems strategy, as described in Section 2.1 of the LRMP.

All desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines related to terrestrial wildlife in Section 2.3 of the LRMP will continue to apply within the Monument, except where specifically noted below. In addition, plan

components designed specifically to address terrestrial wildlife within the Monument will be adopted. These additional plan components focus on protecting wildlife habitat within the Monument, with specific emphasis on mule deer and elk migration corridors, winter concentration areas, and severe winter range, as well as breeding habitat for peregrine falcon. Impacts to special status terrestrial wildlife species will be considered during planning for all projects and activities within the Monument.

Nothing in the proclamation, the LRMP, or the Chimney Rock Management Plan shall be deemed to enlarge or diminish the jurisdiction of the State of Colorado with respect to fish and wildlife management, or shall be deemed to enlarge or diminish the rights of any Indian tribe. The SJNF will continue to ensure that the hunting rights of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe within the exterior boundaries of the Southern Ute Indian Reservation, including lands within the Monument, are upheld. In addition, the SJNF will continue to ensure that the hunting and fishing rights of the 1873 Brunot Agreement are upheld on public lands under their management jurisdiction, including those lands within the Monument. In exercising their Brunot hunting rights, the Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute tribal members are required to adhere to federal policy and regulations designed to protect natural and cultural resources, including direction in the Chimney Rock Management Plan designed to protect the objects of the Monument.

Desired Conditions

- 3.17.72 Wildlife habitat across the Monument continues to support the terrestrial wildlife species considered objects of the Monument.
- 3.17.73 Peregrine falcons continue to occupy breeding habitat on Companion Rock or Chimney Rock.
- 3.17.74 Migrating mule deer and elk continue utilizing winter concentration areas and severe winter range habitat across the Monument.

Objectives

- 3.17.75 Over the life of the plan, conduct management actions designed to maintain or improve desired vegetative composition and structural conditions to provide for short and long-term habitat needs of species. Emphasis areas include habitat for special status species, and elk and mule deer winter concentration habitat and migration corridors.
- 3.17.76 Over the life of the plan, conduct monitoring of deer and elk use in winter concentration areas within the Monument to ensure that habitat capability and effectiveness are maintained during key use periods.
- 3.17.77 Over the life of the plan, conduct monitoring of peregrine falcon nesting on Companion Rock to ensure that habitat capability and effectiveness are maintained during key use periods.
- 3.17.78 Within one year of plan approval, issue a closure order prohibiting public entry into the 400 acre area surrounding Chimney Rock and Companion Rock from March 15 to July 31 to help protect breeding habitat for peregrine falcons, with the exception of use along the Great House Trail (NFST 632) (shown in Figure 6 in the EIS).
- 3.17.79 Coordinate with the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and other resource specialists regarding management of big game within the Monument and on adjacent lands.

Standards

Big game winter range and migration corridors:

- 3.17.80 Projects or activities must be designed and conducted in a manner that does not reduce habitat effectiveness, and preserves big game migration corridors within the Monument. (*Similar to LRMP guideline 2.3.62 but has been modified to become a standard*)

Peregrine falcon:

- 3.17.81 Human disturbance must be restricted if adverse impacts to peregrine falcons are detected.
- 3.17.82 New structures must not be developed in peregrine falcon nesting habitat surrounding Companion Rock and Chimney Rock where structures did not historically occur.

Wildlife-human conflict abatement:

- 3.17.83 Construction, reconstruction, and placement of recreational facilities such as garbage receptacles and domestic animal kennels must incorporate design features to minimize wildlife entrapment and access to human-made attractants.

Guidelines

- 3.17.84 Human disturbance should be limited in the 400 acres surrounding Companion Rock and Chimney Rock from March 15 through July 31 to minimize disturbance to peregrine falcons during the breeding season (refer to Figure 6 in the EIS). This does not apply to historic levels and patterns of disturbance under which the nest was established and occupied, but is intended to apply to additional levels or changes in disturbance patterns. *(Similar to LRMP guideline 2.3.49 and direction found in LRMP Table 2.3.2 for peregrine falcons, but has been modified based on site specific conditions within the Monument)*
- 3.17.85 Habitat effectiveness for raptor species should be maintained when conducting management activities within the Monument.

CRNM Lands

Numerous land uses occur within the Chimney Rock National Monument including state highways, county roads, private roads, telephone lines, power lines, gas pipelines, oil and gas monitoring wells, ditches, water pipelines, and ponds. In the past, research projects, commercial filming, and commercial still photography have also occurred. Most of these land uses have been authorized by special use permits, ROW grants, easements, and/or leases. However, some unauthorized activities, including trespass livestock grazing and fences are occurring within the Monument.

All desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines related to lands and special uses in Section 2.18 will continue to apply within the Monument, but with some minor edits. Any edits to existing plan components are noted below. In addition, plan components designed specifically to address lands and special uses within the Monument will be adopted. These additional plan components focus on proper boundary posting, addressing unauthorized uses in an appropriate manner, and protecting the objects of the Monument while still providing appropriate land uses.

In addition to the existing LRMP and the additional plan components listed below, the proclamation also provides direction for management of lands and special uses within the Monument. Specifically, the proclamation prohibits the sale or disposition of any federal lands and interests in lands within the boundaries of the Monument.

Desired Conditions

- 3.17.86 Boundaries of the Monument are clearly marked on the ground.
- 3.17.87 Non-recreation special use authorizations are issued only if the objects of the Monument can be protected.

Objectives

- 3.17.88 Within fifteen years, all unauthorized improvements within the Monument are either eliminated or authorized as appropriate.

3.17.89 Within ten years, the entire boundary of the Monument will be marked and posted.

Standards

3.17.90 Federal lands or interest in lands within the Monument must not be conveyed out of federal ownership. *(Similar to LRMP guideline 2.18.17, but modified to become a standard)*

3.17.91 New non-recreation special use authorizations for new facilities shall be prohibited unless they are within existing utility corridors or along existing roads in order to protect the objects of the Monument. *(Replaces guidance related to Chimney Rock National Monument found in LRMP guideline 2.18.29)*

Guidelines

3.17.92 When offered by a willing entity, the SJNF should acquire lands or interests in lands adjacent to the Monument that have important cultural resources, and/or when acquisition of adjacent properties would enhance protection of the objects of the Monument.

CRNM Fuels and Fire Management

Management of fires within the Monument is dictated first and foremost by firefighter and public safety, but also includes strong consideration of impacts to the historic, cultural, and traditional resources within the Monument, as well as critical infrastructure. In recent years, approximately 750 acres of fuels reduction projects have occurred, including thinning, mastication, prescribed burning, and pile burning designed to help improve forest health, address public safety concerns, and reduce the risk of wildfires to the sensitive cultural resources within the Monument. The proclamation allows for a continuation of these activities when they are needed to address the risk of wildfire, insect infestations, or disease that would endanger the Monument or imperil public safety. Impacts to the objects of the Monument will continue to be considered when determining the appropriate management response to wildland fire and when planning for fuels management projects.

All desired conditions, objectives, standards, and guidelines related to fire and fuels management in Section of the LRMP will continue to apply within the Monument. In addition, plan components designed specifically to address fire and fuels management within the Monument will be adopted. These additional plan components focus on protecting the objects of the Monument when managing fire and fuels.

Desired Conditions

3.17.93 Fire management tactics and strategies used within the Monument are implemented in a manner that minimizes impacts to sensitive cultural resources.

3.17.94 Fuel loading in and around sensitive cultural resources and critical infrastructure within the Monument are at levels that provide relatively low risk to cultural resources, facilities, and visitors from wildfire, and provide for firefighter and public safety.

Objectives

3.17.95 Over the life of the plan, reduce hazardous fuels in and around sensitive cultural resources and critical infrastructure within the Monument.

3.17.96 Within five years, conduct fuel manipulation and fuel reduction on slopes adjacent to archaeological sites and facilities in order to reduce the potential for fire to negatively impact these areas.

3.17.97 Coordinate and partner with Southern Ute Indian Tribe foresters and/or fuels specialists regarding fuels management within the Monument and on adjacent lands.

Standards

3.17.98 For all wildland fires within the Monument, a Forest Service archaeologist must be consulted.

Guidelines

3.17.99 Wildland fires should be suppressed utilizing Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) to help preserve and protect archaeological, historic, cultural, and traditional resources within the Monument.

3.17.100 Dozer operations within the Monument should be limited, and should occur only under the immediate direction of a qualified archaeologist.

Aerially applied fire retardants and ground-based fire retardant applications should only be used in consultation with a Forest Service archaeologist.

3.17.101 When using aerially applied fire retardant and water, tactics to minimize possible erosion should be used.

3.17.102 When using aerially applied fire retardant and water, tactics to minimize possible erosion should be used.

Table 3.17.1 shows the allowable, prohibited, and restricted management activities and uses for the Chimney Rock National Monument.

Table 3.17.1: Chimney Rock National Monument Allowable Uses

| Management Activities and Use | Allowable – Prohibited – Restricted |
|--|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Restricted to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument |
| Prescribed burning | Restricted to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Restricted to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Restricted to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Restricted to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument |
| Lands special use authorizations, and utility corridors. Recreation special uses | Restricted to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument |
| Recreation Special Uses | Restricted to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument |
| Livestock grazing | Prohibited in Alt. B Restricted in Alt. C to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument |
| Facilities | Restricted to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument |
| Motorized (summer) | Restricted to designated roads |
| Motorized (winter) | Prohibited |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Restricted: All non-motorized use restricted to preserve and protect the objects of the Monument. In addition, horses are prohibited on the Great Kiva Trail (#669) & Great House Trail (#632). |
| Mechanical transport (e.g. bicycles) | Restricted to designated roads |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Restricted to roads determined to be necessary for administration and protection of the objects of the Monument |
| Minerals – leasable federal (oil and gas, and other) | Prohibited on all areas of the Monument under federal mineral ownership, with the exception that development of the valid existing lease within the Monument may still occur. When this lease expires, the lands associated with the lease will no longer be available. |
| Minerals – locatable federal | Prohibited |
| Minerals – saleable federal (materials) | Prohibited |

3.18 Spring Creek Wild Horse Herd Management Area (Tres Rios Field Office)

This area was applicable only to BLM lands.

3.19 Perins Peak Wildlife Management Area (Tres Rios Field Office)

This area was applicable only to BLM lands.

3.20 O'Neal Hill Special Botanical Area

The O'Neal Hill Special Botanical Area is designated as a special area on the SJNF to protect and preserve its rare plant species (Figure 3.27.2). It contains the largest known population of Pagosa Springs bladderpod (*Lesquerella pruinosa*), which is a yellow-flowered member of the mustard family that occurs only near Pagosa Springs and in a small area in northern New Mexico. Pagosa Springs bladderpod has a G1 NatureServe conservation status rank, which means it is critically imperiled globally due to extreme rarity. The species is also on the Region 2 Regional Forester's Sensitive Species list. This botanical area, which is located about 14 miles north of Pagosa Springs, is about 130 acres in size and occurs at an elevation of about 8,100 feet. The area occurs on relatively flat plains and hills, and is primarily associated with the Mancos shale geologic formation.

Desired Conditions

- 3.20.1 Pagosa Springs bladderpod has self-sustaining populations.
- 3.20.2 Favorable habitat conditions exist for Pagosa Springs bladderpod.
- 3.20.3 Invasive plant species in the botanical area are absent or rare.
- 3.20.4 Pagosa Springs bladderpod is not trending toward federal listing under the ESA.

Objectives

- 3.20.5 Within 4 years, develop a management plan.

Standards

- 3.20.6 Management activities (including road construction) and motorized travel must not occur in the O'Neal Hill Special Botanical Area unless they are needed to achieve desired conditions or objectives, or for research or restoration.

Table 3.20.1 shows the allowable, prohibited, and restricted management activities and uses for the O’Neal Hill Special Botanical Area.

Table 3.20.1: O’Neal Hill Special Botanical Area Allowable Uses

| Management Activities and Uses | Allowable - Prohibited - Restricted |
|---|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Restricted (may be used to meet desired conditions) |
| Prescribed burning | Restricted (may be used to meet desired conditions) |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Restricted (may be used to meet desired conditions) |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Prohibited |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Prohibited |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Restricted (impacts to sensitive plant species should be minimized) |
| Livestock grazing | Restricted (impacts to sensitive plant species should be minimized) |
| Facilities | Prohibited |
| Motorized (summer) | Prohibited |
| Motorized (winter) | Prohibited |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Restricted (impacts to sensitive plant species should be minimized) |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Prohibited |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Restricted (NSO stipulation may apply) |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry; impacts to the botanical area must be avoided or minimized to the extent practicable) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Restricted (impacts to sensitive plant species should be minimized) |

3.21 Chattanooga Special Botanical Area

The Chattanooga Special Botanical Area is designated as a special area on SJNF lands to protect and preserve its rare plant species, rare plant communities, rare organic soils, and rare riparian area/wetland ecosystems (Figure 3.27.2). It contains iron fens, willow carrs, rich fens, ponds, and mineral springs. The iron fens are fed by highly acidic, mineralized springs from the west. Limonite terraces within the iron fens perch the water table and form an extensive network of pools and ponds. Colorado’s iron fens, including the ones in this botanical area, are particularly unique because their water pH is similar to acid poor fens, whereas the ionic strength of their water is similar to rich fens (Cooper et al. 2002). The rich fens and willow carrs are fed by groundwater from the east and directly from Mineral Creek. This botanical area, which is located about 5 miles northwest of Silverton, is about 75 acres in size and occurs at 10,000 to 10,400 feet in elevation.

The iron fens of the Chattanooga Special Botanical Area are associated with the Engelmann spruce/bog birch/water sedge/sphagnum plant community, which has a G2 NatureServe conservation status rank, meaning it is imperiled globally due to its rarity. That community is characterized by an overstory of Engelmann spruce and bog birch (*Betula nana*), and a thick understory of whortleberry (*Vaccinium caespitosum*) and sphagnum (including *Sphagnum angustifolium*, *S. balticum*, and *S. girgensohnii*). *Sphagnum angustifolium* and *S. balticum* are on the Region 2 Regional Forester’s Sensitive Species list. Until its discovery in this botanical area, the range of *Sphagnum balticum* in North America was thought to extend south only to southern British Columbia. Other notable species in these iron fens include bluejoint reedgrass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), water sedge (*Carex aquatilis*), beaked sedge (*C. utriculata*), and wintergreen (*Gaultheria humifusa*). The rich fens and willow carrs are dominated by diamondleaf willow (*Salix planifolia*) and water sedge, and the mineral springs contain a rare liverwort (*Jungermannia rubra*).

Desired Conditions

- 3.21.1 The rare plants are vigorous and have self-sustaining populations.
- 3.21.2 The ecosystems and habitats on which the rare plants and plant community depend are sustained.
- 3.21.3 The ecological integrity of the fens and other wetlands are intact (including their native biota, mineral and organic soils, and hydrology).
- 3.21.4 The fens and wetlands have sustainable hydrologic conditions.
- 3.21.5 Invasive plant species are absent or rare.

Objectives

- 3.21.6 Determine the amount of snowmobile use that is occurring in and adjacent to the Chattanooga Special Botanical Area.
- 3.21.7 If snowmobile use in and adjacent to the Chattanooga Special Botanical Area increases significantly, put up interpretive signs that describe the purpose and values of the area and that notify the public that snowmobile use in the area is prohibited.
- 3.21.8 Within 4 years, develop a management plan.

Standards

- 3.21.9 Management activities (including road construction) and motorized travel must not occur in the Chattanooga Special Botanical Area unless they are needed to achieve desired conditions or objectives, or for research or restoration.

Table 3.21.1 shows the allowable, prohibited, and restricted management activities and uses for the Chattanooga Special Botanical Area.

Table 3.21.1: Chattanooga Special Botanical Area Allowable Uses

| Management Activities and Uses | Allowable - Prohibited - Restricted |
|---|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Prohibited |
| Prescribed burning | Prohibited |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Prohibited |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Prohibited |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Prohibited |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Restricted (maintenance of existing utility line may be allowed) |
| Livestock grazing | Prohibited |
| Facilities | Prohibited |
| Motorized (summer) | Prohibited |
| Motorized (winter) | Prohibited |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Prohibited |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Prohibited |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Restricted (NSO stipulation may be applied) |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry; impacts to the botanical area must be avoided or minimized to the extent practicable) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Prohibited |

3.22 Smoothing Iron and Boggy Draw Old Growth Recruitment Areas

Old growth recruitment areas on SJNF lands are special areas where existing or potential old growth stands are managed for their old growth values through both active and passive management (Figure 3.27.2). They are also places that can be used for research, education, and interpretation.

The Smoothing Iron Old Growth Recruitment Area, which is located on Haycamp Mesa about 6 air miles northeast of the town of Dolores near Spruce Water Canyon, occurs on about 2,500 acres at an elevation of approximately 8,200 feet. The Boggy Draw Old Growth Recruitment Area, which is located about 6 air miles northeast of Dolores near House Creek, occurs on about 2,500 acres at an elevation of approximately 8,100 feet. These areas, which display old growth ponderosa pine stands on mesa tops with gentle slopes, are rare in the tableland landscapes on the west side of the SJNF.

Desired Conditions

- 3.22.1 Existing old growth ponderosa pine stands and their old growth attributes are protected.
- 3.22.2 Existing old growth ponderosa pine stands become larger as more of the lands adjacent to them develop old growth attributes.
- 3.22.3 Low-intensity ground fire occurs with a frequency that is similar to that which occurred during the reference period in ponderosa pine forests (12–30 years).
- 3.22.4 Desirable native plant species, including Arizona fescue, are abundant and well distributed.
- 3.22.5 Invasive plant species are absent or minor.
- 3.22.6 Evidence of active management, such as stumps and roads, are absent or minor.
- 3.22.7 Federal agencies and the public use these areas for research, education, and interpretation.

Objectives

- 3.22.8 Within the next 15 years, use low-intensity prescribed fire or low-intensity wildfire for ecological benefit to maintain, improve, or restore the composition, structure, or function of the ponderosa pine stands.
- 3.22.9 Within the next 15 years, use timber harvest treatments (if necessary) to maintain, improve, or restore the composition, structure, or function of the ponderosa pine stands.
- 3.22.10 Within the next 15 years, decommission roads that are not needed to achieve desired conditions.
- 3.22.11 Within the next 10 years, develop and implement interpretive plans for both areas.

Table 3.22.1: Smoothing Iron and Boggy Draw Old Growth Recruitment Areas Allowable Uses

| Management Activities and Uses | Allowable - Prohibited - Restricted |
|---|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Restricted (to low-intensity) |
| Prescribed burning | Restricted (to low-intensity) |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Restricted (to meet desired conditions) |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Restricted (to meet desired conditions) |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Allowable |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Prohibited |
| Livestock grazing | Allowable |
| Facilities | Prohibited |
| Motorized (summer) | Restricted (only designated routes) |
| Motorized (winter) | Allowable |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Restricted (only designated routes) |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Restricted (to meet desired conditions) |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | NSO |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry; impacts to old growth areas must be avoided or minimized to the extent practicable) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Prohibited |

3.23 Dolores River Canyon

This area was applicable only to BLM lands.

3.24 Silverton

This area was applicable only to BLM lands.

3.25 HD Mountains

The HD Mountains (MA 2) total approximately 49,000 acres (see Figure 3.27.2). The area's elevation ranges from just over 6,000 feet to just under 9,000 feet. Private and state lands (located primarily along the flanks of the USFS-administered lands) make up a small portion of the HD Mountains area (and are not subject to the direction of the LRMP). A 25,140-acre CRA within the HD Mountains forms the core of the MA.

The roadless area provides many social and ecological benefits. As urban areas grow in southwest Colorado, undeveloped private lands continue to be converted to urban areas and rural infrastructure. In the increasingly developed landscape in the vicinity of the HD Mountains, this large unfragmented tract of land serves a critical role (in that it provides functioning watersheds and biological strongholds that promote diversity for plant and animal populations). The area provides a large, relatively undisturbed landscape with opportunities for dispersed outdoor recreation (opportunities that diminish as open space and natural settings are developed elsewhere). The area also serves as a bulwark against the spread of non-native invasive plant species and provides a reference area for study and research related to development in the roadless area.

The HD Mountains area encompasses the northeastern portion of the San Juan Basin (which is a geologic structure containing one of the largest natural gas reservoirs in the world). The majority of the area has been leased for oil and gas development, and markets have prompted additional interest and investments in gas wells and associated facilities and infrastructure in the San Juan Basin. Natural gas development in the HD Mountains is controversial due to the potential impacts to roadless area values, surface water and

groundwater, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, property values, tax revenues, employment, and air quality in the Weminuche Wilderness area and the Mesa Verde National Park Class 1 air quality areas.

Companies or individuals holding existing valid leases have legal, non-discretionary development rights. Over the next few decades, as gas is produced and transported, the impacts of development will be evident; however, in the long-term, the SJNF would manage its lands so that facilities (including all surface and subsurface features related to management activities) would be reclaimed when no longer needed, so that altered lands would be restored to natural conditions. Planning for, and administering, management activities with the intent to ultimately reclaim development areas will make for a more rapid and successful recovery to natural conditions. An important element of this recovery effort is the approximately 22,400 acres of the roadless area that would remain unroaded under the gas field development plan authorized by the Northern San Juan Basin FEIS and ROD (BLM and USFS 2006; USFS and BLM 2007).

Although the primary values and important characteristics listed below are not all unique to the HD Mountains, the fact that they all occur in the same area makes the HD Mountains unique and deserving of special management approaches. The overall goal of management approaches in the HD Mountains is to maintain, improve, and/or return these values and characteristics to the landscape. These values and characteristics are described below.

The Northern San Jan Basin FEIS and ROD was signed on April 4, 2007 and provides guidance for gas-field development in the HD Mountains area. The development approach required by the FEIS/ROD balances valid existing gas development lease rights with legitimate social and environmental issues. It also sets the stage for the long-term goal of returning the area to a natural condition. Under the direction of the LRMP, the program approach would include comprehensive implementation, monitoring, mitigation, and reclamation plans for all phases of project development that address gas seepage, water quality/quantity, landslides, wildlife, vegetation, recreation, transportation, visual resources, noise, health and safety, air quality issues, and the minimization of impacts to the CRA.

In addition, a CRMP will be developed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office and other consulting parties. The CRMP will provide a framework in which to address cumulative impacts to cultural resources and will provide strategies for proactive management of cultural resources within the Northern San Juan Basin area of potential effects (which includes the HD Mountains area).

In addition, hazardous fuels reduction projects will continue to prioritize the WUI-related to SJNF/private land boundaries.

Noxious weeds are managed cooperatively with the State of Colorado (especially in relation to impacts to the Little Squaw Creek drainage).

Primary Values and Important Characteristics

Roadless Area: The HD Mountains area includes the 25,140-acre HD Mountain CRA. This area is important for recreational opportunities, pristine and primitive conditions, wildlife habitat, and roadless values (including those described above). The roadless area may also take pressure off of the more heavily used wilderness areas and WSAs within the planning area by providing solitude and quiet, as well as dispersed recreation opportunities.

Wildlife Habitat: The HD Mountains area, and the associated CRA, represent important, unfragmented wildlife habitat. They also provide connectivity to other important wildlife habitats. The combination of elevation, exposures, and vegetation also means that much of the area is winter range. In addition, important migration corridors for big game and other migrating wildlife are present in the area. The relatively unique occurrence of oak brush on north-facing slopes in the HD Mountains adds to the importance of the area as bear habitat.

Archeological Resources: The HD Mountains area contains important archeological resources (including the Spring Creek, Sauls Creek, Armstrong-Ritter, Turkey Creek, and Peterson Gulch Proposed

National Register Districts, and other archeological sites) resources offering unique information and values. These sites and districts may provide information related to Chimney Rock, neighboring populations in the lower San Juan Basin (including Gobernador Valley and Chaco Canyon), and settlements to the west (including Mesa Verde National Park and Canyons of the Ancients National Monument). They may also provide important clues about chronology and settlement patterns, relationships with temporally parallel neighboring populations, and resource utilization across the HD Mountains area landscape.

Geology and Geomorphology: The HD Mountains area is noteworthy for its geology, topography, and landslides. It also contains many areas of steep, unstable, erosive soils and slopes, as well as the Fruitland Formation, which is one of the most productive formations for natural gas in the San Juan Basin. The Fruitland Formation is exposed at the surface in the HD Mountains area, in a feature known locally as the Outcrop. The Outcrop is an important hydrogeologic feature connected to the Fruitland Formation coalbed methane gas reservoir and freshwater aquifer.

Surface Water and Groundwater Resources: Due to the area's dry climate and the unique hydrogeology of the Fruitland Formation, surface water and groundwater are critical resources in the area. There are important water resources connected to the Fruitland Formation, and freshwater springs are present in the core area of the HD Mountains area.

Vegetation: The HD Mountains support a variable mix of vegetation types, ranging from sagebrush to cool-moist mixed conifer forests. Old growth ponderosa pine forests and aspen forests still stand in portions of the HD Mountains area. The stands of old growth ponderosa pine in the HD Mountains area are particularly important (because this is a rare resource in the planning area). In addition, *Townsendia globella* and the riparian natural plant communities of boxelder-narrowleaf cottonwood/red osier dogwood forest, straleaf willow shrubland, and narrowleaf cottonwood-rocky mountain juniper forest are also important vegetation types of the HD Mountains.

Social and Economic Values: The existing and potential natural gas resources in the HD Mountains area have significant direct and indirect economic benefits for the local and regional area related to gas-field development. The area also provides important social and economic value to the local area (including motorized and non-motorized recreation, primitive solitude, hunting, enjoyment of scenic vistas, and benefits related to gas-field revenues and taxes). Examples of these values include low residential property taxes, as well as new or improved city and county facilities, services, and infrastructure.

Recreation: Recreational opportunities in the HD Mountains area include wide open vistas, as well as views of Chimney Rock, the Piedra River valley (to the east), and the Pine River valley (to the west). The core roadless area provides opportunities for hiking, hunting, and horseback riding in an environment of natural sights and sounds. There are motorized trails on the western and eastern flanks of the HD Mountains.

Livestock Grazing: Livestock grazing is an important use of the HD Mountains area (which has several active allotments that would continue to be used). This use is not expected to increase or decrease significantly in the future.

Fire and Fuels Management: Fire and fuels management are important activities in the HD Mountains area. These management activities would be aimed at reducing fire risk to private lands and residences along the flanks of the core area, as well as improving the overall health of the lands within the planning area and restoring a more natural condition.

Desired Conditions

- 3.25.1 Specific actions for cultural resources are protected, preserved, and interpreted as directed in the Northern San Juan Basin CRMP.
- 3.25.2 High-priority historic and prehistoric resources are stabilized and preserved for future generations.

-
- 3.25.3 The Spring Creek, Sauls Creek, Armstrong-Ritter, Turkey Creek, and Peterson Gulch National Register Districts/Proposed National Register Districts are maintained in an undisturbed condition and protected from impacts (including from vandalism, visual intrusion, surface disturbances, and erosion).
- 3.25.4 Motorized travel occurs on designated motorized roads and trails within the boundaries of the Spring Creek, Sauls Creek, Armstrong-Ritter, Turkey Creek, and Peterson Gulch National Register Districts/Proposed National Register Districts.
- 3.25.5 Scenic integrity meets an overall moderate scenic integrity objective, and areas of high scenic integrity are maintained, wherever practicable.
- 3.25.6 Although private land and mineral access may be authorized, as appropriate, opportunities to protect private and other key resources is sought through cooperative efforts with local, state, tribal, and other federal agencies.
- 3.25.7 Coordination between local, state, tribal, and other federal agencies is effective and ongoing (especially regarding the integration of management for the San Juan Basin gas field).
- 3.25.8 Water quality is maintained at current, or improved, conditions. Water quantity is maintained at current levels, unless affected by natural factors (including drought).
- 3.25.9 In general, management activities maintain or improve roadless area values, wherever practicable, with a long-term goal of returning the landscape to an unroaded condition. Existing roads in areas such as Spring Creek, Sauls Creek, Turkey Creek, Goose Creek, Lange Canyon, Fosset Gulch, and the Relay Tower Road, as well as motorized trails proposed under the Northern San Juan Basin FEIS/ROD Travel Management Plan (USFS and BLM 2007) remain open to motorized travel indefinitely.
- 3.25.10 Development practices allow for efficient extraction of fluid mineral resources in order to maximize recovery and related economic benefits (including property tax base and other indirect social and economic benefits to the local and regional area).
- 3.25.11 Mineral resources are developed so that the area can be returned to a relatively natural setting as production phases out.
- 3.25.12 Existing mineral leases are reasonably developed using the minimum size and amount of facilities necessary. Future mineral leases are issued with NSO stipulations.
- 3.25.13 Facilities are designed and constructed with the goal of ultimately reclaiming them to closely resemble pre-construction conditions.
- 3.25.14 Facilities are located in order to minimize or avoid construction in steep, erosive, unstable, highly visible, and/or other critical resource areas (including water influence zones, areas with low potential for revegetation, and areas of known habitat for sensitive, threatened or endangered plant and animal species).
- 3.25.15 Where facilities are required, they are collocated, to the extent practicable, in order to reduce overall disturbance and indirect impacts (e.g., vehicle trips, air quality impacts, etc.).
- 3.25.16 Reclamation plans are an integral component of management activities.
- 3.25.17 Natural resources unique to the area (including old growth ponderosa pine forests, wildlife habitat, and water sources) are effectively protected and managed in conjunction with other actions.
- 3.25.18 Wildlife habitat effectiveness and connectivity is maintained.

- 3.25.19 Wildlife habitat and big game winter range are protected, enhanced, or replaced.
- 3.25.20 Management activities avoid disturbance to old growth vegetation. Prescribed fire may be used in old growth vegetation areas after site-specific field review and documentation of analysis and affirmative decision is completed.
- 3.25.21 Forest health, restoration, and fuels management are routine and recurring management activities (especially along the flanks of the HD Mountains). Forest ecosystem health is consistent with minimally disturbed natural systems. Fire-return intervals and risks of catastrophic fire are consistent with the range of natural variability for the various forest communities. Stand structures and vegetative compositions are representative of more natural conditions.
- 3.25.22 Forest health, restoration, and fuels projects are completed in order to reduce fire risk to private lands and residences along the flanks of the HD Mountains, with an overall goal of improving forest health while, at the same time, maintaining and/or returning the area to a more natural forested condition.
- 3.25.23 Invasive plant species (including noxious weeds) are absent or rare in the HD Mountains area.
- 3.25.24 Management activities complement primitive recreation and roadless values.
- 3.25.25 Livestock grazing management complements roadless values and natural forest conditions.
- 3.25.26 Motorized travel occurs on designated roads and trails during appropriate times. Mineral development roads authorized by the Northern San Juan Basin FEIS/ROD are closed year-round to public motorized use (see the Northern San Juan Basin FEIS/ROD for travel management direction.)
- 3.25.27 Air quality impacts from management activities are reduced or avoided using BMPs and the best available technology.

Objectives

- 3.25.28 Every 5 years, unless otherwise determined by the Authorized Officer, complete elk and deer habitat enhancement project(s) (to be completed by operators conducting oil and gas activities in the HD Mountains area). The project(s) must enhance acreage in elk habitat or deer winter range in the HD Mountains area (preferably on state and/or SJNF-administered lands) in an amount that is equal to, or greater than, the acreage disturbed in elk habitat or deer winter range by oil and gas activities in the area.
- 3.25.29 Permanently close all roads that are not designated as open in the Travel Management Plan (roads not used by industry to access coalbed methane sites and not used for administrative purposes). Measures would be taken in order to effectively close such roads to all motorized use (including to full-size vehicles, ATVs, motorcycles, OHVs, and snowmobiles). Measures would include, but are not limited to, blocking roads at least one site distance up the roadbed by placing large boulders, livestock gates, and/or earthen barriers interspersed with tree trunks and branches or obliterating and recontouring areas back to the original slope.
- 3.25.30 Every 5 years, stabilize, rehabilitate, or restore 1 mile or more of gullied channels in order to reduce erosion and sediment delivery.
- 3.25.31 Annually, treat the full length of Crowbar Creek and Sauls Creek in order to control noxious weeds (primarily musk thistle [*Carduus nutans*]) with funds provided by the USFS and/or BLM and/or obtained through collection agreements/other funding instruments executed with oil and gas permittees.

3.25.32 Twice per year, treat Spring Creek, Salt Canyon and Fosset Gulch in order to control noxious weeds (primarily musk thistle) with funds provided by the USFS and/or BLM and/or obtained through collection agreements/other funding instruments executed with oil and gas permittees.

Table 3.25.1 shows the allowable, prohibited, and restricted management activities and uses for the HD Mountains MA 2.

Table 3.25.1: HD Mountains Allowable Uses

| Management Activities and Uses | Allowable - Restricted - Prohibited |
|---|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Allowable |
| Prescribed burning | Allowable |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Restricted (treatments generally would not be allowable in the core roadless area) |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Restricted |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Allowable |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Restricted (to minimize impacts; should utilize existing corridors and disturbed areas where practicable) |
| Livestock grazing | Allowable |
| Facilities | Restricted (facilities would not be allowed within the roadless area and would generally be limited throughout the entire area) |
| Motorized (summer) | Restricted (summer motorized travel is suitable and may occur on designated routes; seasonal motorized restrictions may apply in order to protect resources and wildlife habitat areas) |
| Motorized (winter) | Prohibited |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Allowable |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Restricted (road development would be limited to lease contract obligations and for restoration management, as necessary) |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Restricted (NSO, CSU or TL stipulations may apply) |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry per the 1872 Mining Law; however, the exploration and development of mining claims may be subject to restrictions to protect resources) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Prohibited |

3.26 McPhee

The McPhee area includes the Anasazi National Register Archeological District and McPhee Dam (see Figure 3.27.2). With over 997 archeological sites, the Anasazi National Register Archeological District contains one of the densest concentrations of Ancestral Puebloan sites in the southwestern United States. These sites were identified and documented during the Dolores Archeological Project. In 1977, the district was established in recognition of this unique concentration of nationally significant cultural resources and landscapes. These sites are associated with Basketmaker III (A.D. 500–750), Pueblo I (A.D. 750–900), and Pueblo II (A.D. 900–1150) culture periods. Rising and falling water levels associated with management of McPhee Reservoir continue to impact these sites causing erosion, loss of archaeological resources, and NAGPRA issues.

McPhee Dam was constructed on the Dolores River in order to provide storage for irrigation and municipal and industrial water in southwest Colorado. McPhee Reservoir also provides outstanding recreation opportunities for boating, fishing, hiking, and ATV use.

The McPhee area also includes the McPhee Reservoir Sauropod Locality. The sauropod is an important dinosaur fossil that will be protected and preserved as required by the PRPA. This significant fossil is

currently being managed by the USFS in partnership with Colorado Mesa University. See Section 2.17 Paleontological Resources, for specific desired conditions for the McPhee Reservoir Sauropod Locality.

Under the direction of the LRMP, management of the McPhee area emphasizes protection and preservation of archeological and paleontological sites, while at the same time providing recreation opportunities and protecting big game winter range and sage-grouse habitat. Focused management will address the intensive recreational use of the area, as well as the ongoing impacts to significant archeological and paleontological resources. An integrated archeological, recreation, and interpretive plan should be developed. The existing archaeological monitoring plan will be implemented in order to improve management and to protect archeological resources in the area. A proactive management approach will take full advantage of the educational, interpretive, scientific, and research opportunities available within the area. These proactive approaches include interpretive trails, "Passport In Time" projects, campground programs, and "Archaeology Month" programs. In order to improve management, archeological testing will be conducted on sites that are 100% surface collected in order to determine if subsurface deposits exist. This information can be used to determine future management and uses of these sites. Archeological sites could also be assessed in the waterline in order to ascertain impacts associated with fluctuations in reservoir levels. Data recovery will be conducted, if necessary, in order to mitigate adverse impacts.

Desired Conditions

- 3.26.1 McPhee offers diverse recreation for communities while, at the same time, preserving archeological and paleontological resources.
- 3.26.2 McPhee provides big game winter range and sharp-tailed (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*) and sage-grouse habitat.
- 3.26.3 Vegetation is managed in order to protect and enhance cultural and paleontological resources.
- 3.26.4 Interpretive and educational opportunities enhance visitor experience and increase stewardship of sites.
- 3.26.5 User-made trails are rerouted or eliminated in order to avoid impacts to archeological and paleontological sites.
- 3.26.6 Hazardous fuels are managed in order to protect and preserve archeological resources, and to reduce the risk of wildfire to recreational facilities.
- 3.26.7 Cultural viewsheds are preserved; incompatible uses or developments are prevented.
- 3.26.8 The SJNF partners with the Bureau of Reclamation to address impacts to archaeological resources and NAGPRA issues.
- 3.26.9 The SJNF partners with research organizations to test archaeological sites and conduct data recovery if sites are being impacted.

Objectives

- 3.26.10 Within 5 years, implement site-steward and "adopt-a-site" programs.
- 3.26.11 Over the implementation life of the LRMP, develop two interpretive trails.
- 3.26.12 Within 10 years, test two sites for subsurface archeological deposits.
- 3.26.13 Within 5 years, implement archaeological monitoring plan.
- 3.26.14 Within 3 years, reroute or close user-made trails that are impacting archaeological resources

Table 3.26.1 shows the allowable, prohibited, and restricted management activities and uses for the McPhee.

Table 3.26.1: McPhee Allowable Uses

| Management Activities and Uses | Allowable - Prohibited - Restricted |
|---|--|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Restricted in order to protect significant archaeological resources |
| Prescribed burning | Restricted |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Allowable |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Restricted |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Restricted (significant archaeological resources must be protected) |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Prohibited |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Restricted (to minimize impacts to archaeological resources; utilize existing corridors where practicable) |
| Livestock grazing | Allowable |
| Facilities | Restricted to existing facilities (significant archaeological resources must be protected prior to the development of any new facilities) |
| Motorized (summer) | Restricted to designated routes |
| Motorized (winter) | Restricted |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Restricted |
| Mechanical transport | Restricted to designated roads and trails |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Restricted |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Administratively not available |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry per the 1872 Mining Law; however, the exploration and development of mining claims may be subject to restrictions to protect resources) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Restricted |

3.27 Rico

The Rico “special area” includes the USFS-administered lands adjacent to the town of Rico (Figure 3.27.2). Approximate boundaries include Telescope Mountain to the northeast, Spruce Gulch to the southeast, Burnett Creek to the southwest, and Horse Creek to the northwest. The Rico area is located in a subalpine region of the San Juan Mountains, with elevations ranging from 8,800 feet in town to 12,681 feet on nearby Blackhawk Mountain. The area’s climate is best described as having four distinct seasons with significant winter snows, as well as the associated springtime runoffs. The large volumes of water from the winter snowmelt support a vast conifer and aspen forest with interspersed meadows. The high altitude and southerly latitude of the Rico area offer diverse and sometimes extreme climatic conditions that can range from warm and pleasant sunny days in the middle of January to harsh snowstorms in the summer months. Due to the high altitude, significant temperature drops usually occur at night. Snowstorm events can be substantial, and it is not unusual for roads to be closed, power to be disrupted, and/or emergency services to be delayed.

The Rico area is located primarily on the east side of the Dolores River (which is fed by several tributaries). The headwaters of these tributaries begin in the cirques and basins formed by the numerous surrounding mountain peaks. The majority of these peaks (including Expectation, Dolores, and Telescope) have elevations of over 12,000 feet. The area supports an array of big game wildlife (including deer, elk, sheep, mountain lion [*Puma concolor*], and black bear [*Ursus americanus*]). Elk and deer are primary resources. Small game is also plentiful (including blue grouse [*Dendragapus obscurus*] and snowshoe hare). The Dolores River, Silver Creek, and many other local tributaries, support a diverse

plant and wildlife ecosystem. Canada lynx have recently been reintroduced into the SJNF and are often seen in the area.

The historic mining industry in the Rico area has provided a rich cultural history and is the reason the town was founded; however, it has also left behind a legacy of environmental damage. Impacts are primarily from previous mining activities (including mill tailings, mine dumps, shafts and tunnels, water quality degradation, and lead contamination to some of the area's soils). Hundreds of active unpatented mining claims continue to surround the Rico area.

The town of Rico is relatively remote. The nearest towns to the north are Telluride and Mountain Village (which are approximately 28 miles away, over Lizard Head Pass). The nearest towns to the south are Dolores (approximately 40 miles away) and Cortez (approximately 50 miles away).

Rico is a community that aims to preserve its small mountain town historic character, even as the population grows. The community uses the natural resources of the surrounding public lands in order to assist in building a new post-mining economy. The relatively undeveloped, non-resort character of Rico is rapidly becoming rare in Colorado (as it is in other western states). Preserving the feel and appearance of the historic compact "mountain town" land pattern of the existing town is extremely important to the residents and property owners of Rico. New development areas beyond the historic town plat will complement the existing town site by focusing development adjacent to town on the north and south sides while, at the same time, preserving natural forest areas to the east and west of town. Management of population growth, new development, and overall rate of growth are essential to preserving the unique character and relationship between the USFS/BLM and the Rico community (USFS and Town of Rico, Colorado 2011).

Under the direction of the LRMP, focused management of this area will address the impacts that occur in tandem with private land development and the maintenance of the interconnected SJNF resources. A sustainable management approach that maintains the close relationship between the people of Rico and the landscape of public lands will allow these goals to be met.

The Rico special area would offer an opportunity for the SJNF to work collaboratively with the people of Rico in order to develop sustainable management practices for the planning area. SJNF managers will develop an MOU for projects in the Rico area in order to outline common goals and achieve sustainable management approaches throughout the implementation life of the LRMP.

Desired Conditions

- 3.27.1 Management of SJNF-administered lands contributes to or enhances the historic "mountain town" scale and appearance of the Rico.
- 3.27.2 Trailheads and informational signage direct locals and visitors to the appropriate desired recreational experience.
- 3.27.3 Land ownership patterns are improved and consolidated between the town, private landowners, and the SJNF in order to enhance community development objectives and to reduce resource impacts (including to the viewshed on the surrounding public lands).
- 3.27.4 Trails accessing SJNF-administered lands from within town boundaries emphasize non-motorized recreation modes in order to emphasize the community's quiet-use character.
- 3.27.5 Restoration and preservation of the natural space, beauty, and terrain of the area is recognized as the principal resource asset to the town.
- 3.27.6 Undeveloped areas and CRAs on SJNF-administered lands near and/or around Rico provide quality elk and other large game habitat and wildlife corridors. These areas also provide quality hunting and wildlife viewing, as well as pristine backcountry non-motorized recreational experiences.

- 3.27.7 Undeveloped and roadless areas on SJNF-administered lands near and/or around Rico continue to provide habitat for wildlife and contribute to the sustainable reintroduction of the Canada lynx.
- 3.27.8 Select historic structures associated with the area's past mining history are stabilized, protected, and interpreted.
- 3.27.9 Area residents, as well as the visiting public, are directed to appropriate areas for non-motorized and motorized recreation opportunities through a variety of informational, educational, and interpretational venues.
- 3.27.10 Instream flows on the upper Dolores River above McPhee Reservoir are maintained in order to enhance and preserve the scenic quality of the Dolores River (and the surrounding watershed) and protect fisheries, riparian, and aquatic habitat.
- 3.27.11 The watersheds surrounding Rico are maintained and enhanced, with a focus on water quality improvement for perennial streams entering the Dolores River.
- 3.27.12 Water quality entering the Dolores River is improved due to collaborative remediation efforts to clean up mining-impacted lands in the Rico area.
- 3.27.13 The Silver Creek watershed remains the municipal water source for the town of Rico until such time as additional and/or new water sources are developed. Rico's municipal water supply source is protected from development activities that would cause negative impacts, per the town's permitting process and in coordination with the SJNF.

Objectives

- 3.27.14 Emphasize a proactive working relationship between the town of Rico and the SJNF that serves to preserve and protect the uniqueness of the Rico community. Annual meetings between the town and the SJNF will be encouraged in order to review community and public land management objectives specific to the public lands within the Rico MA 2 area.
- 3.27.15 Within 5 years, develop a parking lot outside the town limits for the Burnett Trailhead in order to provide an adequate staging area for motorized recreational experiences, along with preserving the quiet of the community while, at the same time, providing motorized opportunities.
- 3.27.16 Annually, sign a minimum of one trail within the Rico area in order to inform and direct appropriate recreation use.

Table 3.27.1 shows the allowable, prohibited, and restricted management activities and uses for the Rico area.

Table 3.27.1: Rico Area Allowable Uses

| Management Activities and Uses | Allowable - Restricted - Prohibited |
|---|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Allowable |
| Prescribed burning | Restricted to mitigating natural disturbances (including insect or disease epidemics) and preventing adverse impacts to the surrounding viewshed, watershed, and overall land health |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Restricted to mitigating natural disturbances (including insect or disease epidemics) and preventing adverse impacts to the surrounding viewshed, watershed, and overall land health |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Allowable |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Allowable |
| Land use ROWs, special use permits, and utility corridors | Allowable |
| Livestock grazing | Allowable |
| Facilities | Restricted (facilities such as parking areas, staging areas, and adequate signage, are generally suitable to direct and inform recreation activities) |
| Motorized (summer) | Restricted to motorized routes and trails designated within the Rico area |
| Motorized (winter) | Restricted to motorized areas designated within the Rico area |
| Non-motorized (summer and winter) | Allowable |
| Mechanical transport | Allowable |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Restricted (permitted in order to provide access to valid existing rights, including mining claims; temporary construction may occur in some areas in order to achieve resource restoration objectives) |
| Minerals - leasable (oil and gas, and other) | Restricted (an NSO stipulation would be applied to CRAs within the Rico area; CSU and TL stipulations may be applied to specific locations, as necessary, in order to mitigate resource impacts) |
| Minerals - locatable | Allowable (open to mineral entry per the 1872 Mining Law; however, the exploration and development of mining claims may be subject to restrictions to protect resources) |
| Minerals - saleable (materials) | Restricted (limited road access and other constraints in the Rico area may limit or preclude mineral development) |

Figure 3.27.1: Special Areas and Designations, Tres Rios Field Office

This figure was applicable only to BLM lands.

Special Areas and Designations
San Juan National Forest
Figure 3.27.2

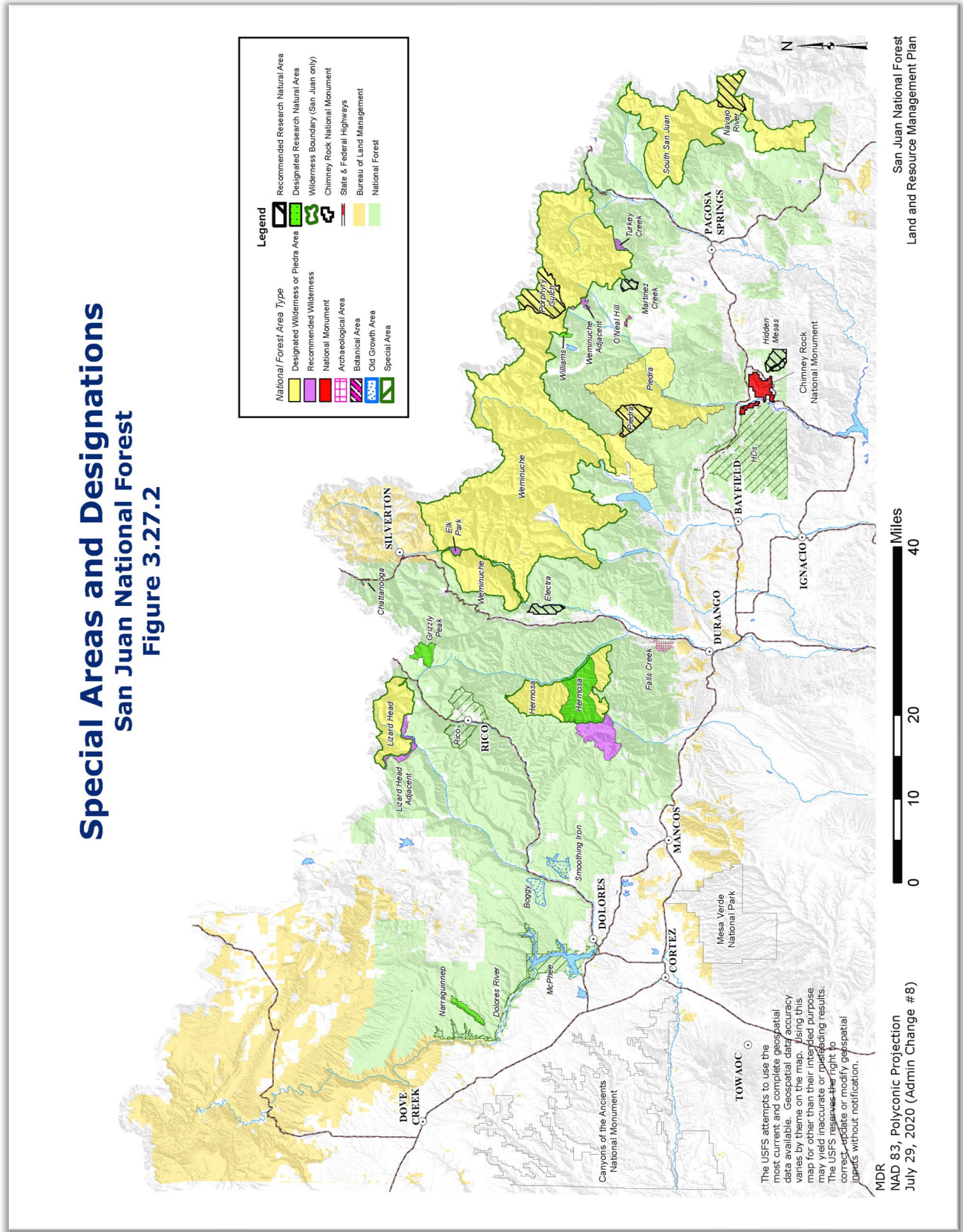


Figure 3.27.2: Special Areas and Designations, San Juan National Forest

3.28 Hermosa Creek Watershed

Introduction

In 2006, a regional grass-roots group called the River Protection Workgroup was organized to address local water resource issues. The workgroup brought diverse stakeholders together in a collaborative process to determine values needing protection, such as ecological, economic and social; to recommend the types of tools necessary to protect the values; and to make recommendations and take action in the context of striking a balance between the protection of natural values and water development. The River Protection Workgroup formed five sub-groups to focus on five local watersheds: the San Juan River, the Piedra River, the Pine River and Vallecito Creek, the Animas River, and Hermosa Creek.

The Hermosa Creek sub-Workgroup met from 2008-2010. The collaborative, community process, which operated on consensus, involved many citizens and organizations in discussions about the human and natural values in the Hermosa Creek watershed. It was a group represented by many points of view, including water users, recreational users, state agencies, the Southern Ute tribe, conservation organizations, and US Congressional representatives. After almost two years of work, the Hermosa Creek Workgroup arrived at a set of recommendations. Central to their work was recommending that special federal legislation be developed, introduced, and passed. Their final report and recommendations were forwarded to the US Congress in 2010.

After several years of drafts, working through committees, and changes in Congressional representatives, the Hermosa Creek Watershed Protection legislation was finally signed into law on December 19, 2014 as Section 3062 in the *Carl Levin and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (PL 113-291)*. Throughout the remainder of this section, this is referred to as "the legislation."

The legislation divided the watershed into a Special Management Area (SMA) and a wilderness area. Within the SMA, the legislation also delineates the East Hermosa Roadless Area (which was already a designated Colorado Roadless Area before the legislation), and Parcels A and B, which relate to minerals interests.

A brief summary of the key points of the legislation follows. The legislation states that:

"The purpose of the Special Management Area is to conserve and protect for the benefit of present and future generations the watershed, geological, cultural, natural, scientific, recreational, wildlife, riparian, historical, educational, and scenic resources of the Special Management Area."

The legislation states that the following uses **shall** be allowed:

- Motorized and mechanized vehicles, but only on roads and trails designated by the Forest Service.
- Over-snow vehicles, subject to terms and conditions as required by the Forest Service.
- Grazing, if already established before the Act, subject to applicable laws and orders.

The legislation further **prohibits** the following activities:

- Road construction in the East Hermosa Roadless Area, except as allowed by the Colorado Roadless Rule.
- Commercial timber harvest in the East Hermosa Roadless Area, except as allowed by the Colorado Roadless Rule.
- Disposal of land, mining patents, and minerals leases, subject to valid existing rights, except in parcels A&B.

The legislation states that the following activities **may occur**:

- Management of wildland fire and hazardous fuels.
- Management of insects and diseases.

The Hermosa Creek Watershed (HCW) planning area encompasses approximately 107,900 acres of federal lands within the Hermosa Creek watershed, which is located north of Durango, within La Plata and San Juan counties, Colorado, Ranges 9-11 West and Townships 36-40 North, N.M.P.M. See *Figure 3.28.1 – Hermosa Creek Watershed Planning Area*. The planning area is divided into several categories as follows:

Hermosa Creek Watershed planning area – 107,900 acres total

- (1) Hermosa Creek Wilderness – 37,400 acres
 - (a) RNA – 15,500 acres
- (2) Special Management Area – 70,600 acres
 - (a) Parcels A&B – 2,400 acres
 - (b) East Hermosa Roadless Area – 43,200 acres

This section applies to the Hermosa Creek watershed only. New components will apply to the Hermosa watershed in addition to all existing LRMP components, other guidance and descriptions given in the LRMP, unless specifically noted herein as being changed. This LRMP amendment will apply to all future projects and management actions within the Hermosa watershed.

Because management actions are generally restricted in wilderness, the following direction is applicable primarily to the SMA portion of the watershed, unless it is stated that it applies to the entire watershed or specifically to the wilderness.

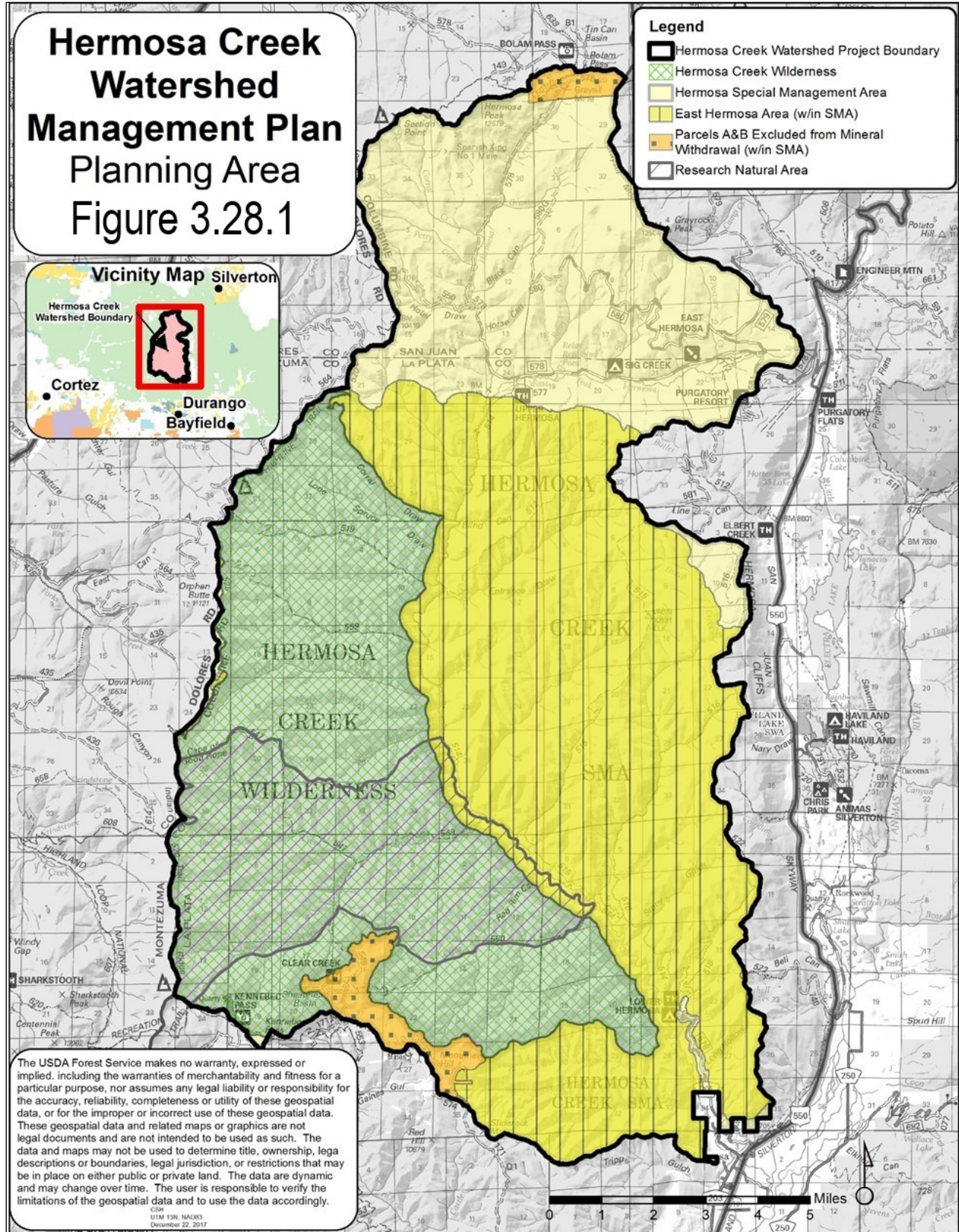
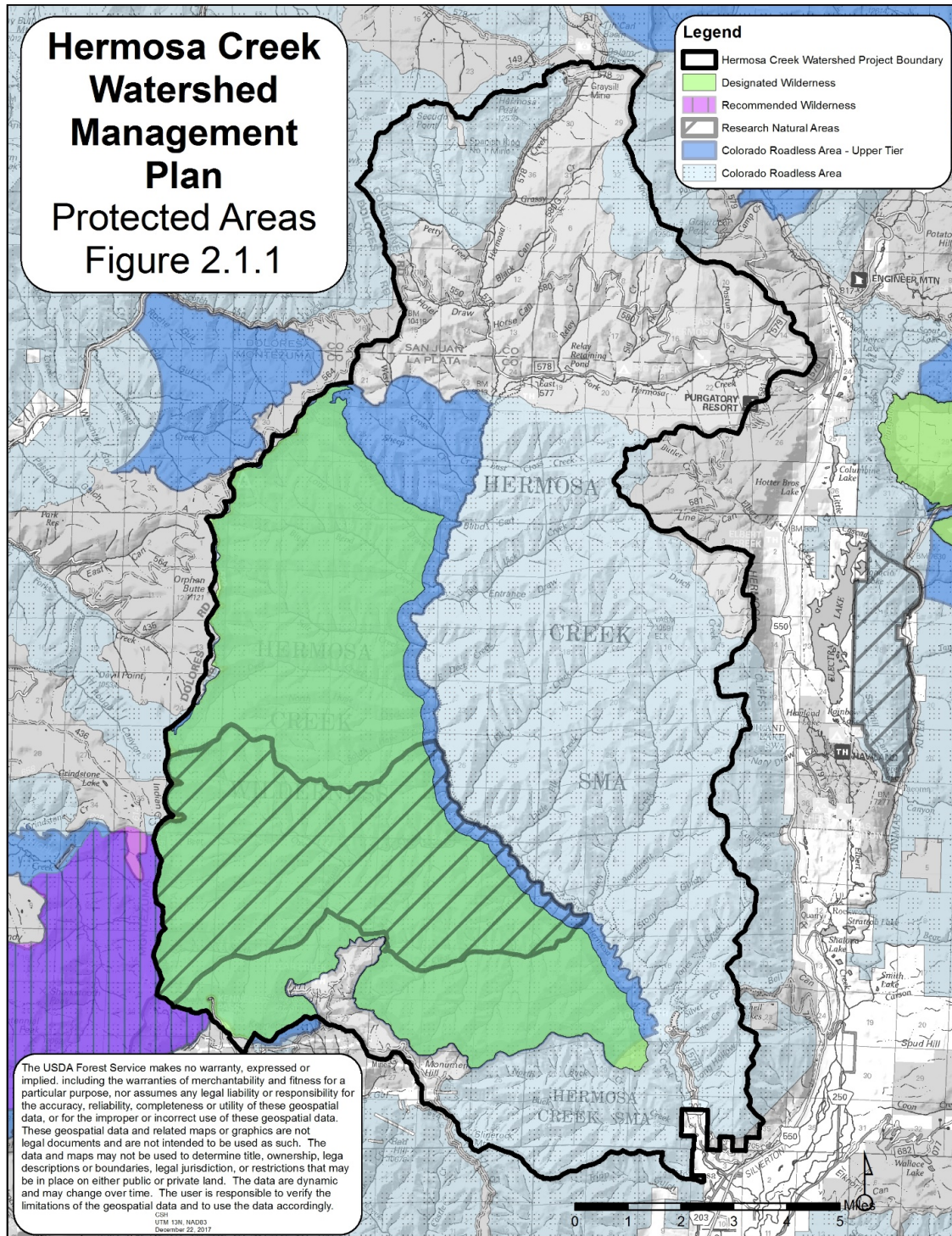


Figure 3.28.1: Hermosa Creek Watershed Planning Area

AREA DIRECTION FOR HERMOSA CREEK WATERSHED HCW Ecological Framework & Conservation of Species

Figure 2.1.1 Protected Areas in the LRMP is amended to add the Hermosa Creek Wilderness as a protected area. This is a non-discretionary administrative change necessary to comply with the legislation. Additionally, the figure is amended so that all of the previously- recommended wilderness in the Hermosa watershed is removed from protected area status.



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.1.1 Protected Areas

HCW Terrestrial Ecosystems and Plant Species

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.1 Native species diversity across the watershed is high, and migration of species is not inhibited so that species may move into new sites and take advantage of changing bioclimatic envelopes and growing conditions while maintaining proper ecological function.
- 3.28.2 Alpine and subalpine flowers continue to propagate, are pollinated, and maintain viable populations within the watershed.
- 3.28.3 In areas where non-native lodgepole pine exists, spruce and fir are the dominant understory species and the forest is converting to a spruce-fir forest.
- 3.28.4 Rare plants ranked highly or extremely vulnerable to climate change as identified by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program are protected from non-climate stressors within the watershed. See current list below, subject to change.

Table 3.28.1. Rare Plants in Hermosa Creek Watershed

| Habitat | Scientific Name | Common Name | Global Status | State Status | Agency Sensitive |
|------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|
| Alpine | <i>Alsinanthe macrantha</i> | house's sandwort | G3 | S2S3 | |
| Alpine | <i>Castilleja puberula</i> | downy indian paintbrush | G2G3 | S2S3 | |
| Alpine | <i>Descurainia kenheilli</i> | hell's tansy mustard | G1 | S1 | |
| Fens | <i>Cryptogramma stelleri</i> | slender rock brake | G5 | S2 | BLM |
| Fens | <i>Erigeron kachinensis</i> | kachina daisy | G2 | S1 | BLM |
| Fens | <i>Mimulus eastwoodiae</i> | Eastwood monkeyflower | G3G4 | S2 | BLM |
| Fens | <i>Puccinella parishii</i> | Parish's alkali grass | G2G3 | S1 | |
| Spruce-fir | <i>Draba malphiacea</i> | Whitlow-grass | G1 | S1 | |

- 3.28.5 The landscape is a diverse mosaic of cover types with a diversity of habitat structural stages spread across the watershed. Mountain grasslands, mountain shrublands, and wetlands are widely distributed across the watershed providing a diversity of species. All development stages of forested ecosystems are well represented across the SMA and occur within the ranges identified in the following table. Within the SMA, this table replaces the Desired Conditions found in the LRMP Table 2.2.1

Table 3.28.2. Vegetation Desired Conditions in Hermosa Creek Watershed

| Vegetation Local Type | % Habitat Structural Stage Desired Condition in the SMA | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------|--------|
| | 1 and 2, 3 | 4A | 4B, 4C |
| Aspen - TAA | 20-40% | 10-20% | 40-70% |
| Aspen with mixed conifer - TAA SW | 20-40% | 10-20% | 40-70% |
| Spruce-Fir - TSF | 10-20% | 10-20% | 60-80% |
| Cool-moist Mixed Conifer - TMC CM | 10-20% | 10-20% | 60-80% |
| Warm-dry Mixed Conifer - TMC WD | 10-20% | 30-50% | 30-60% |
| Ponderosa Pine - PP | 10-20% | 35-55% | 25-45% |

Objectives

- 3.28.6 To maintain a diverse and resilient forest within the aspen vegetation type, increase the amount of young and mature open stands by 20% of the vegetation type (approx. 2,000-3,000 acres) through prescribed burning and timber harvest over the next 15 years.

- 3.28.7 Monitor and map the changes occurring in the spruce-fir forest within the next three years and practice adaptive management to work toward the desired condition. Management tactics may include timber harvest, fire, or mechanical or chemical treatments to enhance forest resiliency.
- 3.28.8 To maintain a diverse and resilient cool-moist mixed conifer forest, using a combination of fire and timber harvest, create regeneration areas across approximately 10% of the cool-moist forest (approx. 600-800 acres).
- 3.28.9 To maintain a diverse and resilient warm-dry mixed conifer forest, using a combination of fire and timber harvest, thin approximately 35% (approx. 1,300 acres of the warm-dry forest to favor drought tolerant species such as Douglas fir and ponderosa pine).
- 3.28.10 To maintain a diverse and resilient ponderosa pine forest, using a combination of fire and timber harvest, create opportunities for natural regeneration across approximately 5% of the ponderosa pine forest (approx. 100-200 acres).
- 3.28.11 Under-plant approximately 100-200 acres of lodgepole pine plantations with native Engelmann spruce, Douglas fir, or other endemic tree species.
- 3.28.12 Inventory alpine and fen ecosystems, evaluate ecosystem health and diversity and identify rare and vulnerable plants for seed collection.
- 3.28.13 Within five years, create and maintain a seed bank of native tree, shrub and plant seed specific to the Hermosa watershed to be used in restoration and reforestation.
- 3.28.14 Within five years, collect seed within the watershed from rare plants moderately to extremely vulnerable to climate change.

Guidelines

- 3.28.15 During any agency actions, consider whether the bioclimatic niche for pre-existing species has changed, and practice active adaptive management to plant species suitable for a new and changing climate.
- 3.28.16 In the stands that are dying from insect, disease and fire, healthy young trees should be maintained for a future stocked forest.
- 3.28.17 Roads identified for decommissioning or restoration should be restored to improve soil condition. Improvements could include increasing soil organic material, carbon, and nutrients (e.g. bio-char or revegetation).

HCW Riparian Area and Wetland Ecosystems

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.18 The East Fork of the Hermosa and the reach of Hermosa Creek just above the East Fork confluence, and their riparian corridors, are in a 'Robust' stream health category, as defined in the Watershed Conservation Practices Handbook.
- 3.28.19 Cool summer stream temperatures are maintained by shade from native riparian hydrophytic species of trees and shrubs and by maintenance of stream channel morphology (pools, riffles, small width to depth ratio, etc.).

Objectives

- 3.28.20 Every ten years, restore at least five degraded riparian sites, five wetland acres, or five acres contributing sediment to the creek system.

- 3.28.21 Move the watershed condition classification in the East Fork Hermosa to “good” through the completion of essential projects identified in the Watershed Restoration Action Plan (SJNF 2012) within 10 years.

Guidelines

- 3.28.22 Over-snow activities authorized under permit should not cause compaction in fens to the extent that soil temperatures and depth of frost penetration are altered in these fragile ecosystems.

- 3.28.23 (intentionally blank)

HCW Aquatic Ecosystems and Fisheries

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.24 Natural and manmade barriers to upstream fish migration adequately protect Colorado River cutthroat trout (CRCT) populations while allowing for stream reaches large enough to support long term population viability.
- 3.28.25 Manmade barriers to upstream fish migration within CRCT habitat are maintained to ensure effectiveness.
- 3.28.26 Free migration of aquatic organisms is not limited by roads, trails, or other infrastructure across the watershed, except under circumstances where non-native fish species are excluded to the benefit of native fish species.

Objectives

- 3.28.27 Replace two road culverts identified as fish migration barriers in Forest Road 578 to reconnect fragmented habitat in Sig and Relay Creeks, within ten years.
- 3.28.28 Construct a barrier to upstream fish migration below the confluence of Hermosa Creek and East Fork Hermosa Creek to fully establish the CRCT meta-population within five years.
- 3.28.29 Implement four stream habitat improvement projects to improve over-wintering habitat and limit sedimentation to streams within ten years.
- 3.28.30 Install interpretive signage where appropriate to educate fishermen of the CRCT re-introduction program, within five years. Include wording about concerns and risks to CRCT populations and proper pathogen risk preventative measures.

Guidelines

- 3.28.31 Road and trail stream crossings across the watershed should be designed to allow for fish passage during all flow regimes.

HCW Invasive Species

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.32 The Forest Service is an active participant in a Hermosa Cooperative Weed Management Partnership.

Objectives

- 3.28.33 Annually treat 10% of known invasive weed populations in the watershed.

HCW Timber & Other Forest Products

Legislative Requirements

3.28.34 Projects undertaken for the purpose of harvesting commercial timber are prohibited, other than activities relating to the harvest of merchantable products that are byproducts of activities conducted for ecological restoration or to further the purposes of the legislation.

Desired Conditions

3.28.35 Opportunities for personal use collection of forest products (such as firewood, stays, mushrooms and medicinal plants) are provided in such a manner that collection does not interfere with ecosystem function or resiliency.

Objectives

3.28.36 Within 10 years after any large-scale mortality event, conduct a post disturbance assessment to evaluate areas of severe mortality and to identify and reforest portions that are accessible, have severe mortality and are not regenerating naturally within the SMA.

3.28.37 Within five years, reforest 90% of identified old timber sales to achieve full stocking.

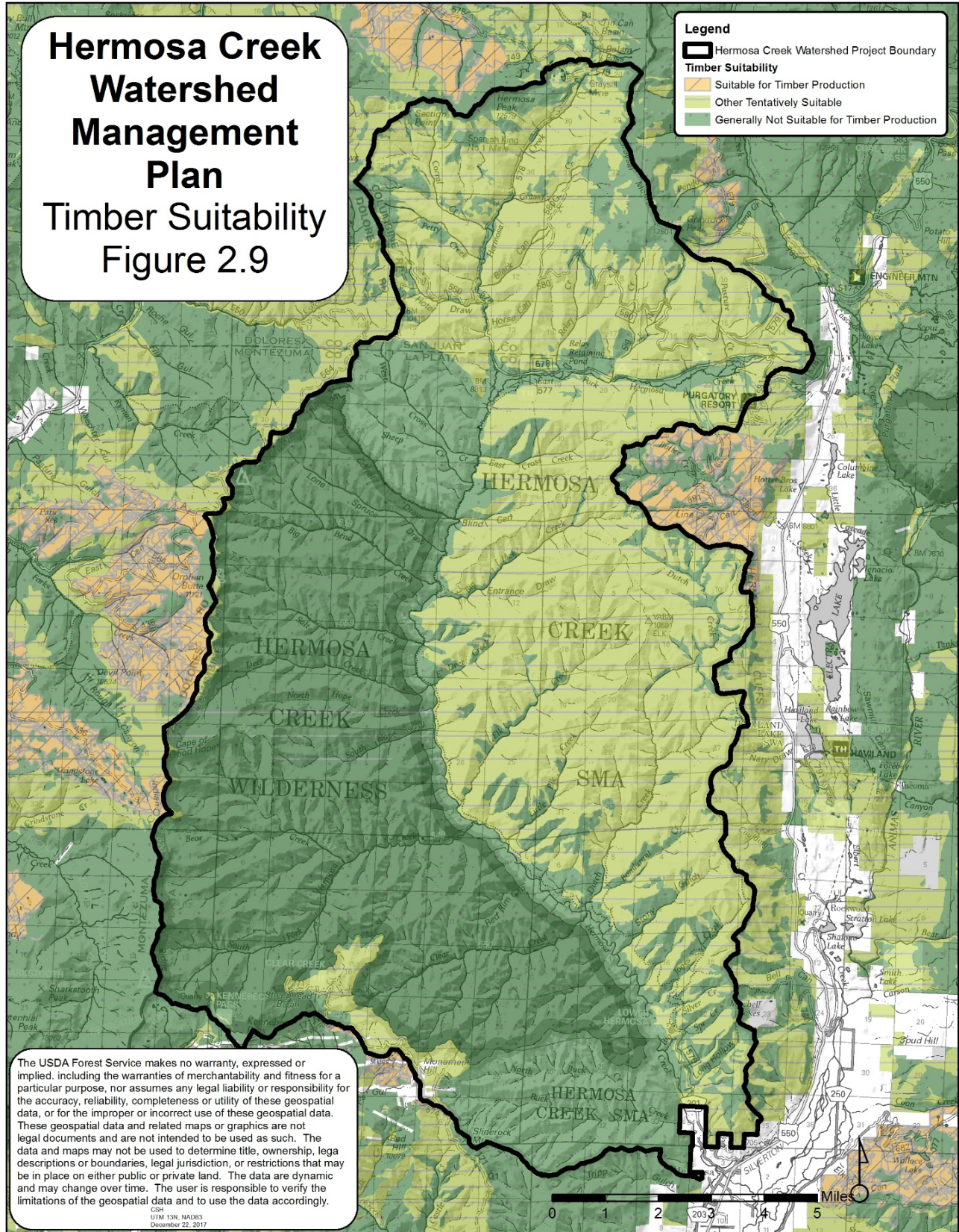
Guidelines

3.28.38 In the event of a large-scale disturbance, timber salvage may occur subject to all applicable laws and regulations, and in a manner consistent with the purposes of the legislation.

3.28.39 Over-snow activities authorized under permit should not cause tree-top damage in plantations to the extent that reforestation success is impaired.

Suitability

Figure 2.9 Timber Suitability in the LRMP is amended to reflect that all “lands suitable for timber production” within the watershed are changed to “other tentatively suitable lands where timber harvest may occur.” This is a non-discretionary administrative change necessary to comply with the legislation.



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.9 Timber Suitability

HCW Insects and Disease

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.40 Insects and diseases are endemic across the watershed, adding to the diversity of the landscape. In areas of mature forest mortality, natural regeneration is healthy and abundant.
- 3.28.41 Indices for beetle epidemics are low to moderate across the watershed in at least 50% of the mature conifer forest.

Guidelines

- 3.28.42 Insect and disease treatments may include the use of biotic controls, pheromones, chemicals, microbial organisms, mycorrhizal fungi, fire, trap trees, slash treatment or other vegetation manipulation, as long as the activity maintains or restores forest health and desired conditions.

HCW Fire and Fuels Management

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.43 Managed natural fire is encouraged within the entire watershed, except in identified Wildland-Urban Interface.
- 3.28.44 Prescribed fire is used as a management tool throughout the SMA.

Objectives

- 3.28.45 Maintain the helispots in the southern SMA by keeping them cleared every 5-10 years. See Figure 3.28.2.

Guidelines

- 3.28.46 Managed natural fire and prescribed fire should be managed to maintain identified plantations at minimum stocking levels, when possible.
- 3.28.47 Minimize physical control line construction within the watershed.

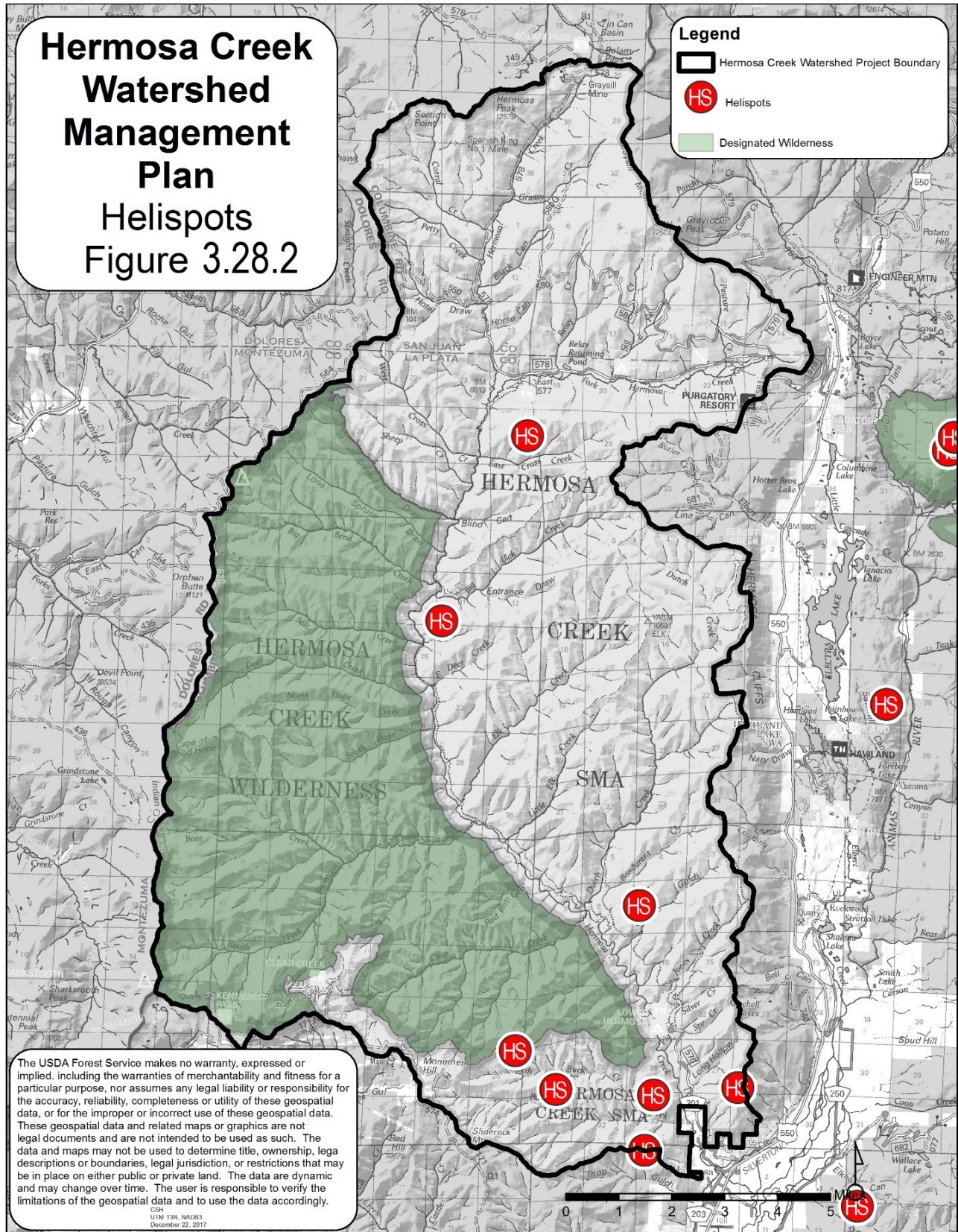


FIGURE 3.28.2. Helisports in the HCW

HCW Access and Travel Management

Legislative Requirements

- 3.28.48 The use of motorized or mechanized vehicles in the SMA shall be permitted only on roads and trails designated by the Forest Service for use by those vehicles.
- 3.28.49 Forest Service shall authorize the use of snowmobiles and other over-snow vehicles within the SMA when there is adequate snow coverage, and subject to terms and conditions the Forest Service may require.
- 3.28.50 New permanent or temporary road construction or the renovation of existing non-system roads are prohibited in the East Hermosa Area, except as allowed by the Colorado Roadless Rule.

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.51 Hermosa Creek Trail is managed to accommodate multiple user types and minimize conflicts.
- 3.28.52 Motorized trail use is provided for within the SMA.
- 3.28.53 Mechanized trail use is provided for within the SMA.
- 3.28.54 Under agreement and supervision of the Forest Service, trails are maintained in cooperation with partners, such as user groups, special use permit holders, and volunteers.

Objectives

- 3.28.55 Install educational signage where appropriate to inform users of site-specific trail designations for vehicle usage and seasonal closure dates; and to educate users about share-the-trail, leave no trace, tread lightly, and similar behaviors, within three years and as needed thereafter.

Standards

- 3.28.56 Over-ground motorized and mechanized travel shall be limited to designated Forest system roads and trails; no cross-county travel is allowed. (Vehicles on user-created, unauthorized non-system, or closed routes will be considered cross-country travel.)
- 3.28.57 Over-ground motorized and mechanized travel shall have seasonal closures to protect resources. A travel management decision will determine the type and applicability of closures.
- 3.28.58 Over-snow motorized and mechanized travel shall be limited to designated Forest system roads, trails, or areas.

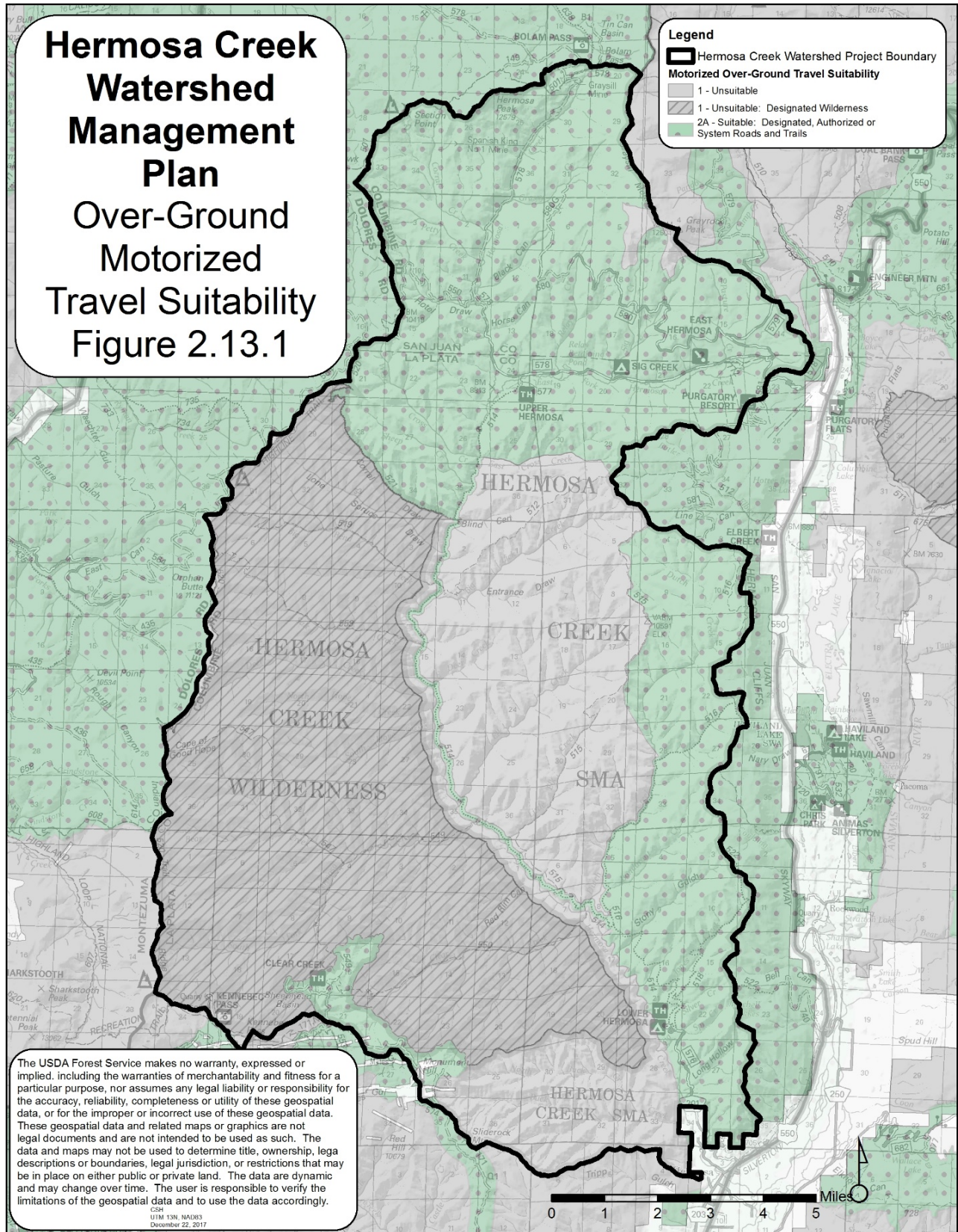
Guidelines

- 3.28.59 Accomplish a 1:1 no net gain of over-ground trail miles within the watershed when adding new trails to the system. This does not apply to trails within the ski area permit boundary.
- 3.28.60 After use of Maintenance Level 1 roads for administrative use, they should be effectively revegetated and closed to prevent unauthorized travel.

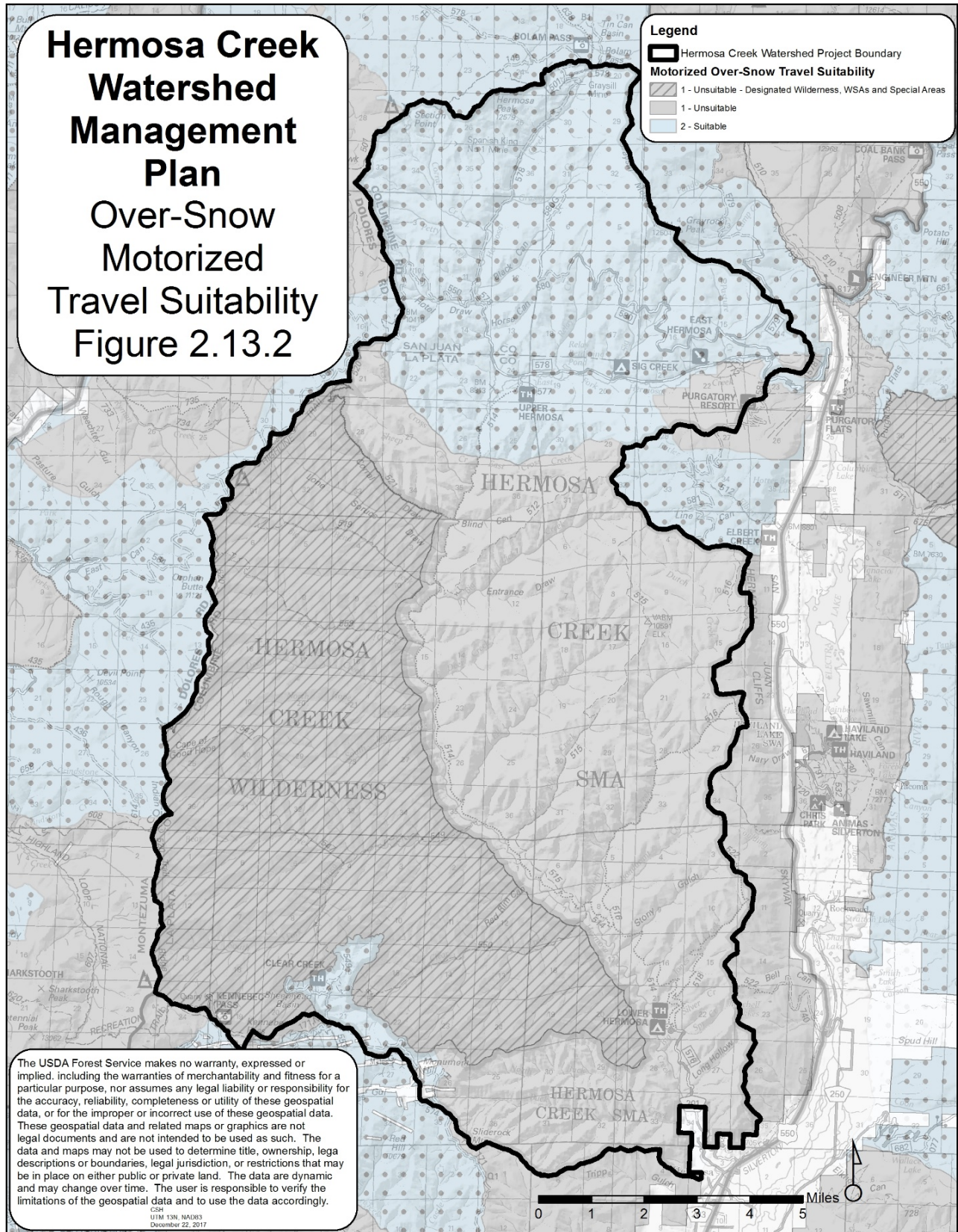
Suitability

Figure 2.13.1 Over-Ground Motorized Travel Suitability in the LRMP is amended in the vicinity of Corral Draw to change from unsuitable to suitable for over-ground motorized travel.

Figure 2.13.2 Over-Snow Motorized Travel Suitability in the LRMP is amended to expand the area of suitability. Criteria that were used to determine over-snow suitability include: critical or severe big game winter range, access for non-motorized users that could lead to user-group conflicts, sufficient snow cover in most years, and historical use patterns. Boundary mapping was made to follow topographic features on the ground that are apparent in the wintertime, such as drainage bottoms or ridgelines. Smaller-scale topography within larger suitable areas (slope, cliffs, etc.) was not used as a criteria because it is impossible to delineate or enforce on the ground. Recognition was given that vehicle technology is evolving and areas once considered inaccessible are becoming accessible. Over-snow use and grooming that are regulated under permit may have restrictions within the suitable area. Additionally, there are currently-existing special use permits allowing motorized use in these areas.



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.13.1 Over-Ground Motorized Travel Suitability



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.13.2 Over-Snow Motorized Travel Suitability

HCW Livestock and Rangeland Management

Legislative Requirements

3.28.61 Permit grazing within the SMA, if established before the date of the legislation, subject to all applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.

Desired Conditions

3.28.62 Conflicts with livestock in developed recreation sites are minimized.

Guidelines

3.28.63 Adaptive management strategies for grazing (such as herding, temporary avoidance areas, or temporary fencing) should be implemented when the stream health category is either “at risk” or “diminished” (WCPH) and where streambank and riparian restoration is occurring.

3.28.64 Fencing should blend with the natural and cultural setting and be wildlife friendly.

HCW Recreation

Desired Conditions

3.28.65 Residential use (taking possession of, occupying, or otherwise using National Forest System lands for residential purposes without a permit or as otherwise authorized by Federal law or regulations) does not occur within the watershed.

3.28.66 All major developed campground facilities are managed by a Forest Service permitted concessionaire.

3.28.67 Dispersed camping does not impact meadows, wetlands, or streambanks within the watershed.

3.28.68 Developed recreation sites are provided to the extent possible to meet demand, considering available Forest Service resources.

Standards

3.28.69 New developed recreation sites must not be planned or developed in the 100-year flood plain.

Guidelines

3.28.70 Control unacceptable or expanding impacts from dispersed camping through education and engineering features first. Restrict dispersed camping to designated sites if impacts cannot be controlled by engineering features.

3.28.71 Fence newly developed recreation sites as part of new construction where grazing is permitted.

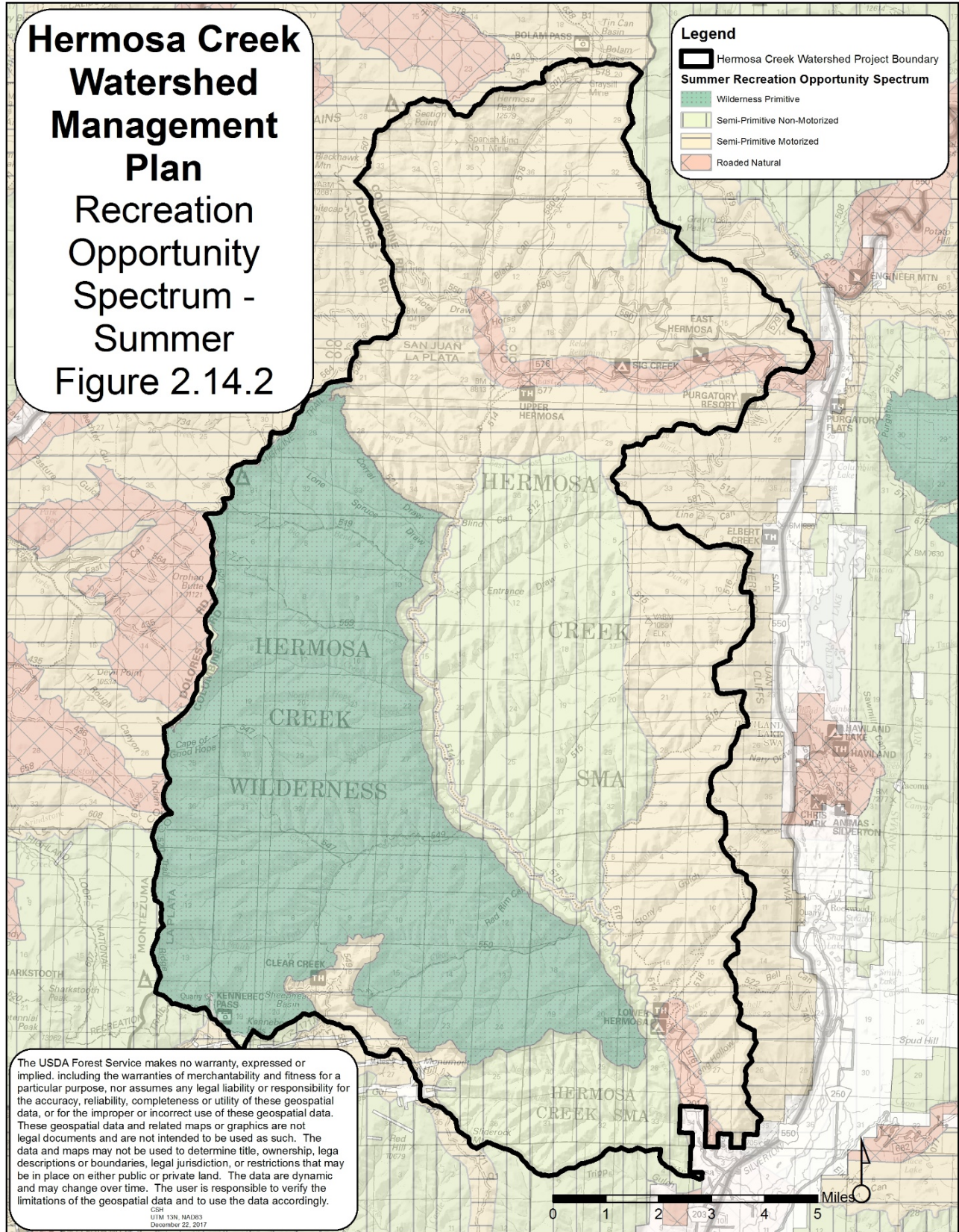
HCW Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

Figures 2.14.2 Summer ROS in the LRMP is amended to align the new wilderness with the “wilderness primitive” class. This is a non-discretionary administrative change to match the legislative designation of wilderness.

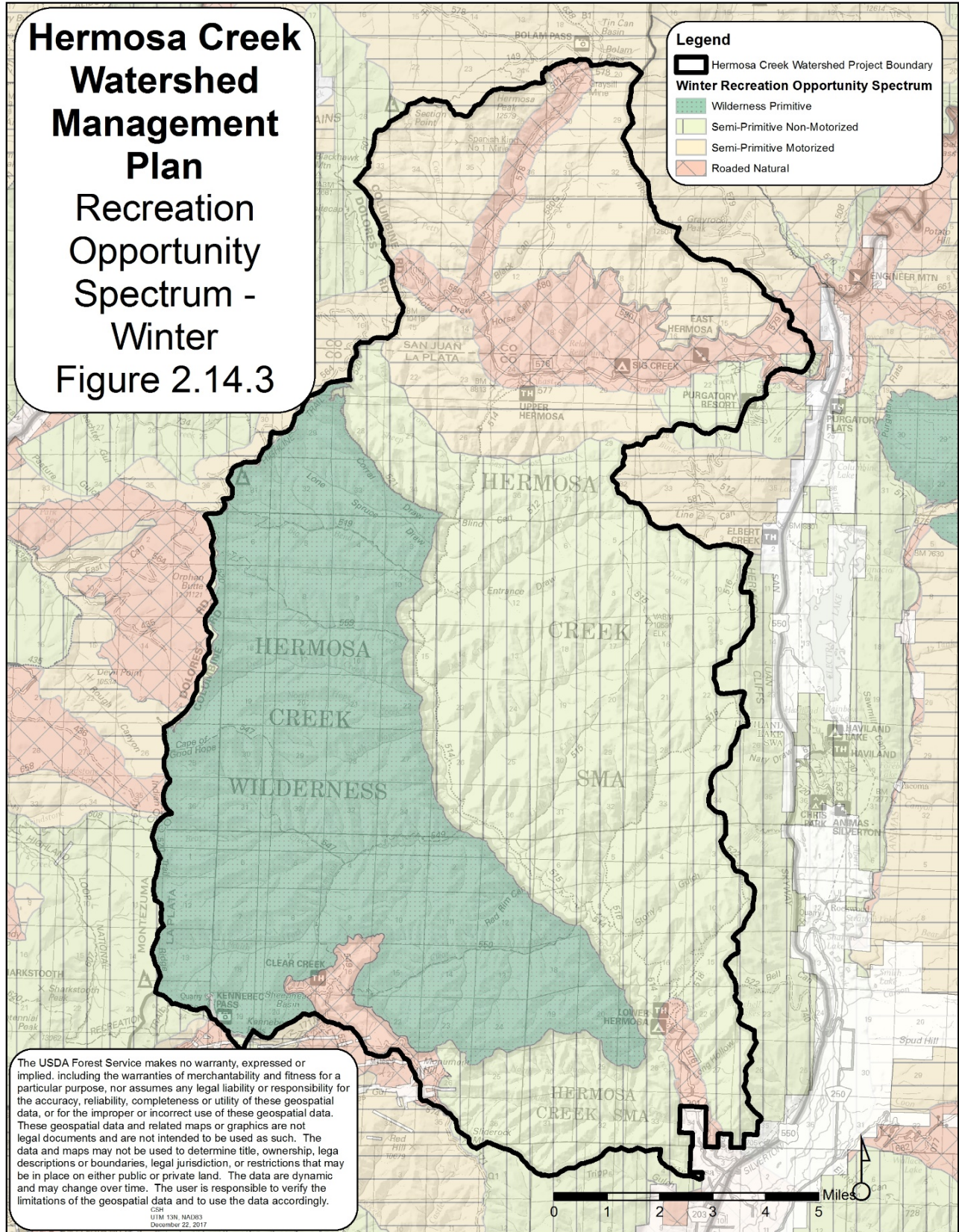
Figure 2.14.3 Winter ROS in the LRMP is amended to align the new wilderness with the “wilderness primitive” class. This is a non-discretionary administrative change to match the legislative designation of wilderness. Additionally, the figure is amended to change the class to “semi-primitive motorized” in the Elbert Creek drainage and near Greyrock Peak to match the motorized over-snow suitability.

HCW Scenery and Visual Resources

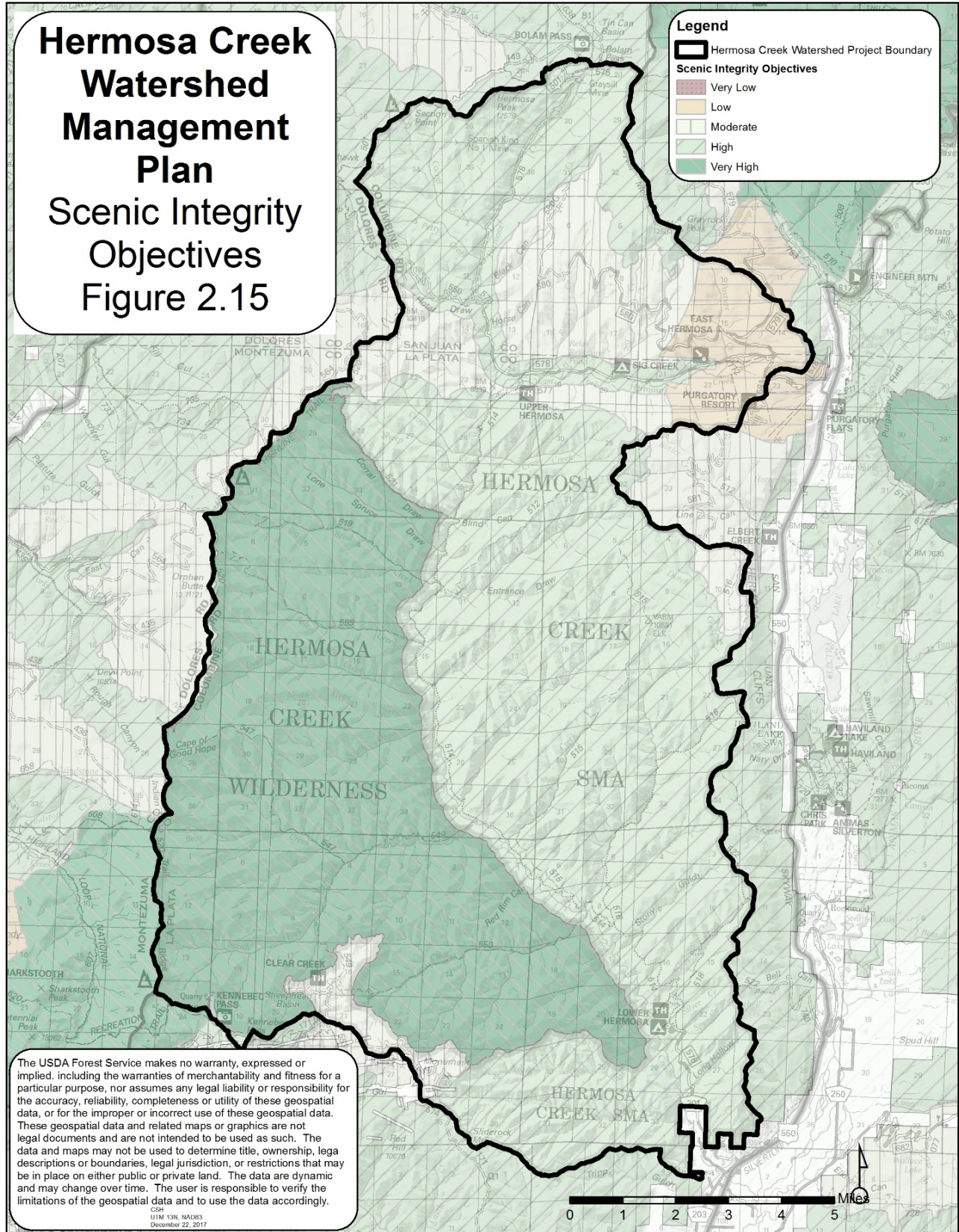
Figure 2.15 Scenic Integrity Objective in the LRMP is amended to remove the Very High objective from all but the designated wilderness.



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.14.2 Summer ROS



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.14.3 Winter ROS



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.15 Scenic Integrity Objectives

HCW Heritage and Cultural Resources

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.72 Significant heritage and cultural resources associated with the historic road and trail network within the watershed are preserved, and may be available for interpretation and research.
- 3.28.73 Significant cultural sites within the watershed are protected from physical damage and excessive wear and tear resulting from visitor use.
- 3.28.74 The Harris Cabin is protected and properly maintained as a Priority Heritage Asset.

Guidelines

- 3.28.75 Site-specific management plans for historic and cultural resources should be developed as protection and interpretation needs are identified.

HCW Lands & Special Uses

Legislative Requirements

- 3.28.76 Federal land (and interest in lands) within the SMA is withdrawn from all forms of entry, appropriation, and disposal under the public land laws, subject to valid existing rights, except for parcels A and B.

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.77 SMA and wilderness boundaries are clearly marked at trail, road, and other major points of entry.
- 3.28.78 Non-recreation special use authorizations are issued only if consistent with the SMA legislation and wilderness management guidelines.
- 3.28.79 Land ownership within the watershed is consolidated in order to facilitate effective land management.

Guidelines

- 3.28.80 When offered by a willing seller, the Forest Service should acquire lands or interest in lands within the watershed boundary, dependent upon availability of funding.

HCW Minerals & Energy

Legislative Requirements

- 3.28.81 Except for Parcels A and B, and subject to valid existing rights, federal land (and interest in lands) within the SMA is withdrawn from:
- all forms of entry, appropriation, and disposal under the public land laws;
 - location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and
 - operation of the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

Desired Conditions

- 3.28.82 Mineral activities in Parcels A and B, and any valid existing rights in the Hermosa watershed, are managed to conserve and protect resources designated in the enabling legislation.

3.28.83 All minerals within the Hermosa watershed are federally owned or subject to non-surface disturbing agreements, except for within Parcels A and B.

Objectives

3.28.84 Within five years, develop a strategy to move valid existing federal and private mineral rights within the Hermosa watershed into non-surface disturbing status, except for Parcels A and B. This includes pursuing opportunities to acquire private mineral rights from willing sellers.

Standards

3.28.85 No surface use is allowed for exploration or development of leasable minerals in Parcels A and B or under valid existing rights.

3.28.86 Locatable, saleable, or private minerals exploration or development that involves surface disturbance (including dredging) in Parcels A and B, or under valid existing rights elsewhere in the SMA, can occur after a Resource Conservation and Protection Plan (RCPP) is authorized by the Forest Service describing measures in the development activity that will conserve and protect resources designated in the legislation. The RCPP is in addition to any other permits or authorizations needed for development or exploration activities.

3.28.87 If non-federal minerals within the Hermosa watershed are acquired by the federal government, these areas must be withdrawn from all forms of entry listed in 3.28.81 above.

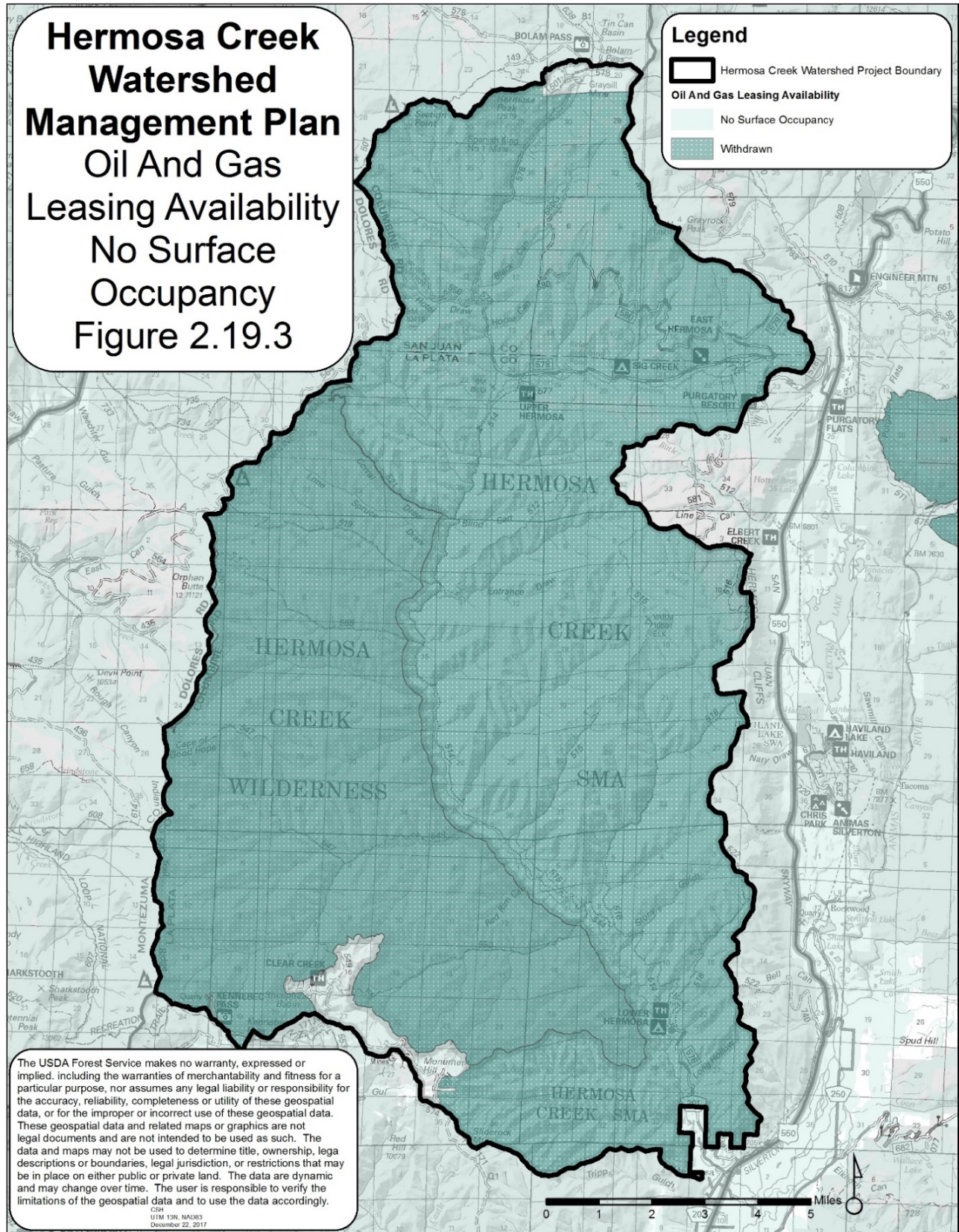
Guidelines

3.28.88 Short term surface disturbance that can be fully reclaimed within one year to a non-detectable status may be allowed, as determined on a case-by-case basis.

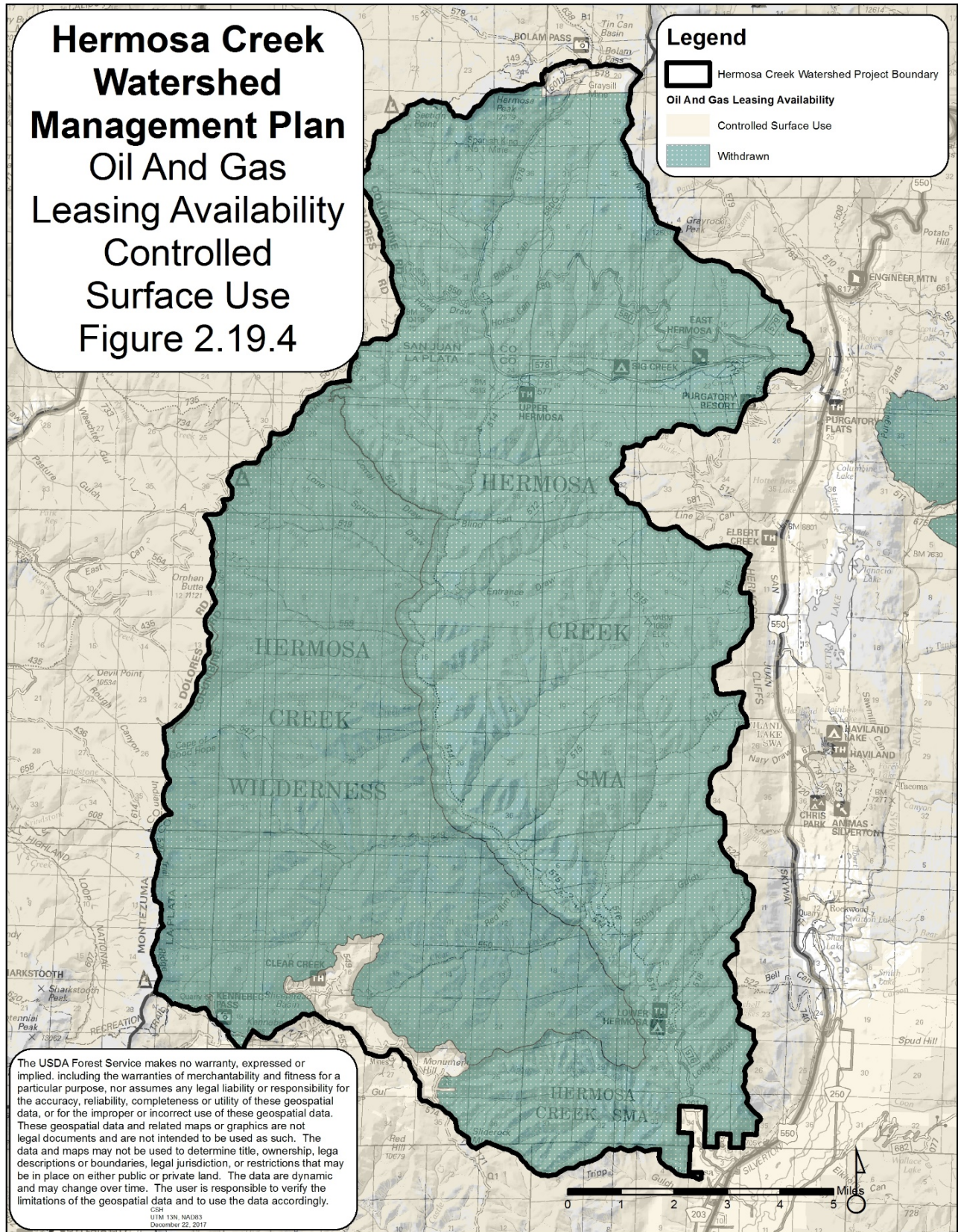
3.28.89 Geologic processes should be allowed to continue shaping the landscape of the Hermosa watershed, unless such processes would interfere with the purposes of the legislation, or would interfere with human health and safety.

HCW Leasing Availability

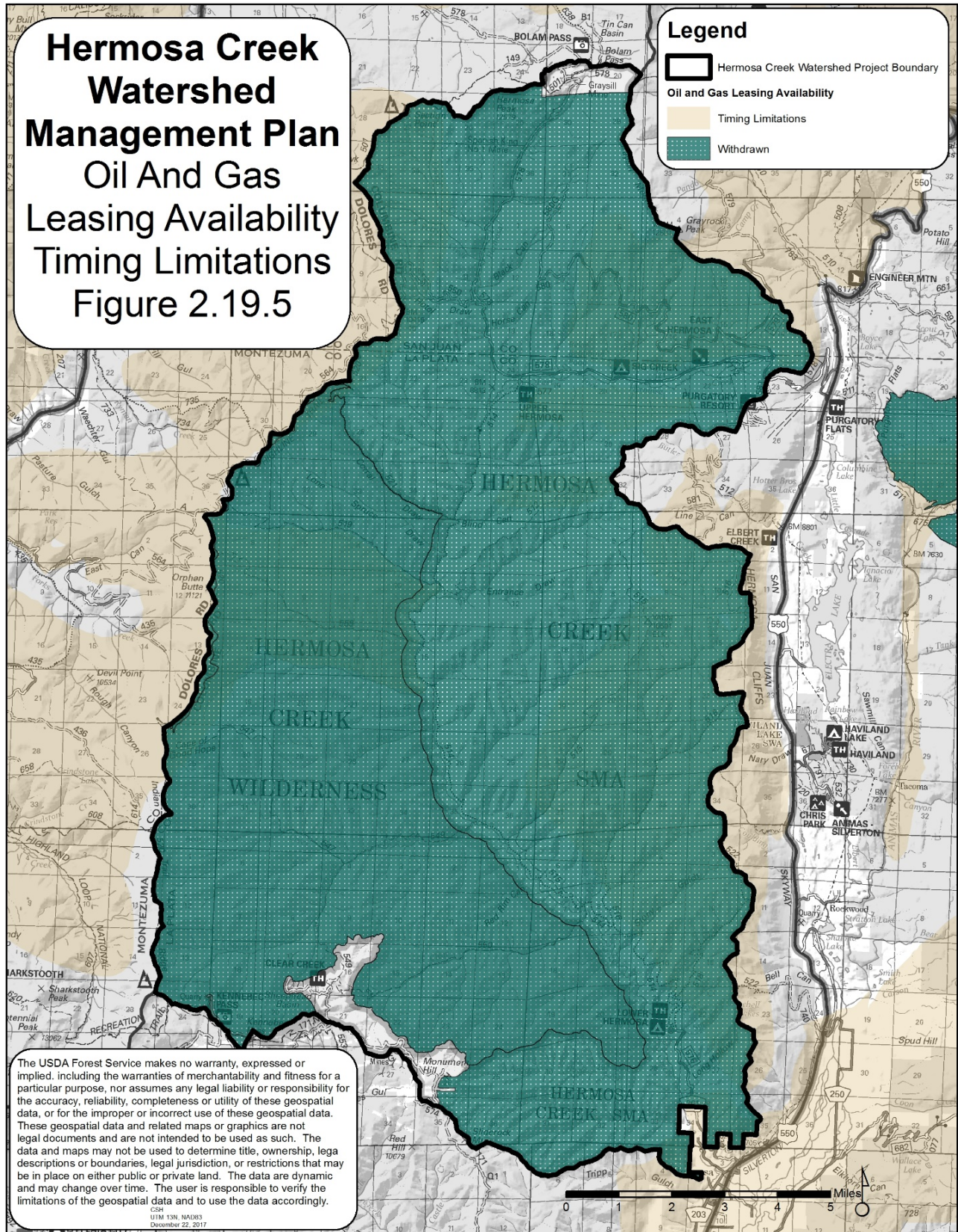
Figures 2.19.3, 2.19.4, and 2.19.5 Oil and Gas Leasing Availability in the LRMP are amended to show the SMA and Wilderness withdrawn from leasing (except parcels A and B). These are non-discretionary administrative changes necessary to comply with the legislation.



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.19.3 Oil and Gas Leasing – No Surface Occupancy



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.19.4 Oil and Gas Leasing – Controlled Surface Use

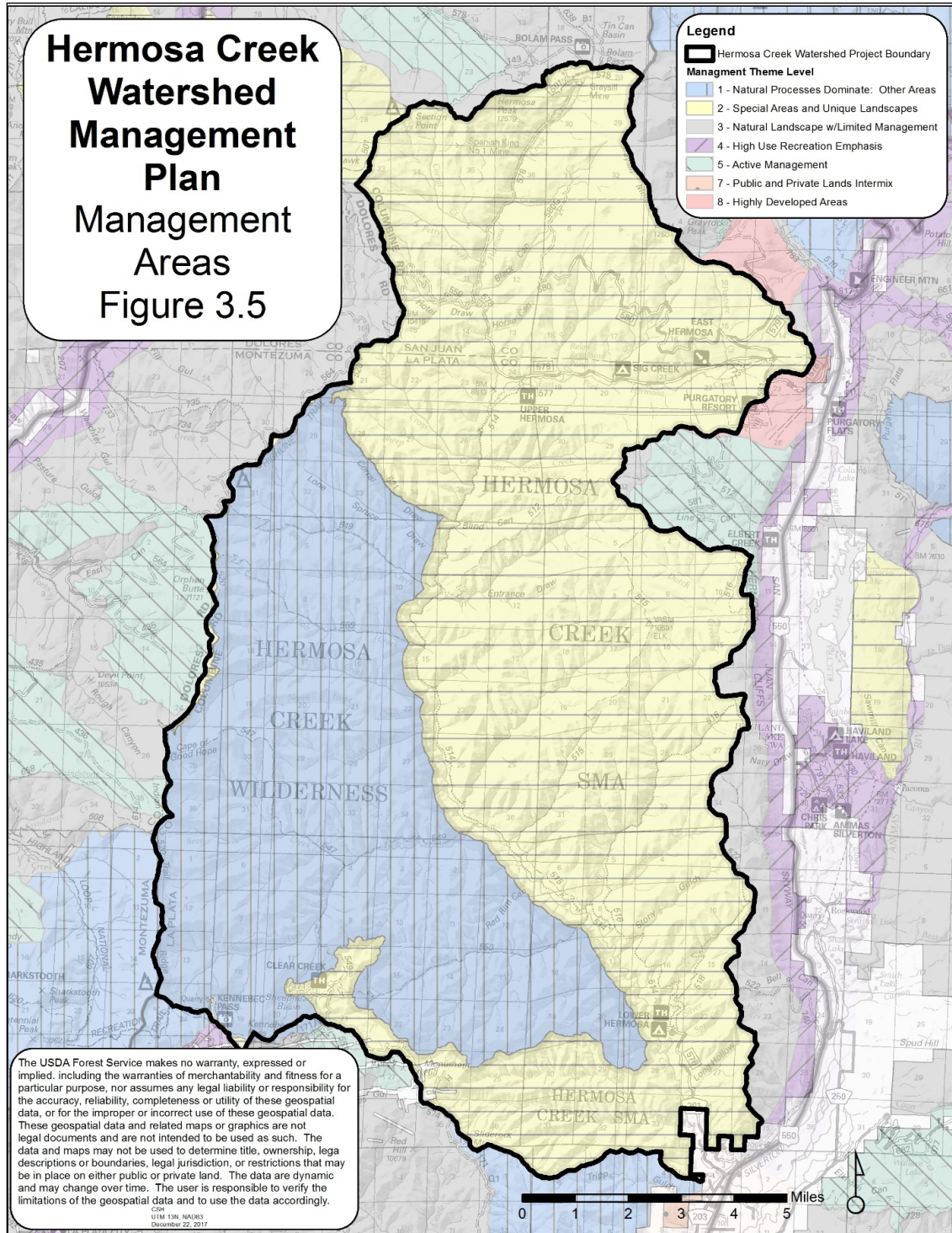


HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 2.19.5 Oil and Gas Leasing – Timing Limitation

AREA DIRECTION FOR HERMOSA CREEK WATERSHED

HCW Management Areas

Figure 3.5 Management Areas in the LRMP is amended to change the SMA portion of the watershed to Management Area 2, and to change the wilderness area of the watershed to Management Area 1. These are non-discretionary administrative changes necessary to comply with the legislative designations.



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 3.5 Management Areas

HCW Wilderness and Recommended Wilderness

Desired Conditions

3.28.90 Wilderness boundaries and regulations are clearly posted on the ground.

Objectives

3.28.91 Make special education and enforcement efforts in first 10 years after the legislation.

3.28.92 Post boundaries within three years of the legislation.

Standards

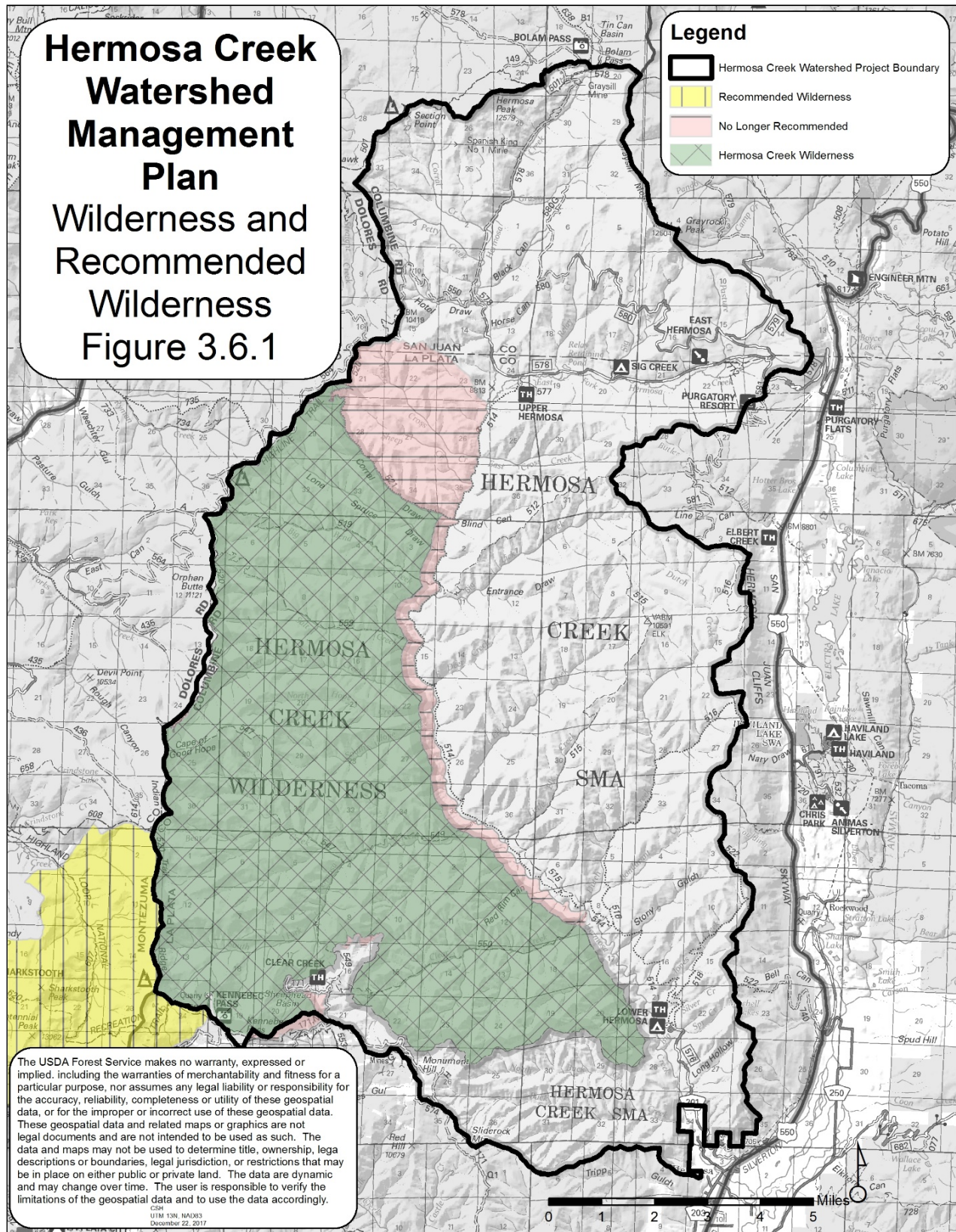
3.28.93 Adopt the standards in the SJNF Wilderness Management Direction.

Guidelines

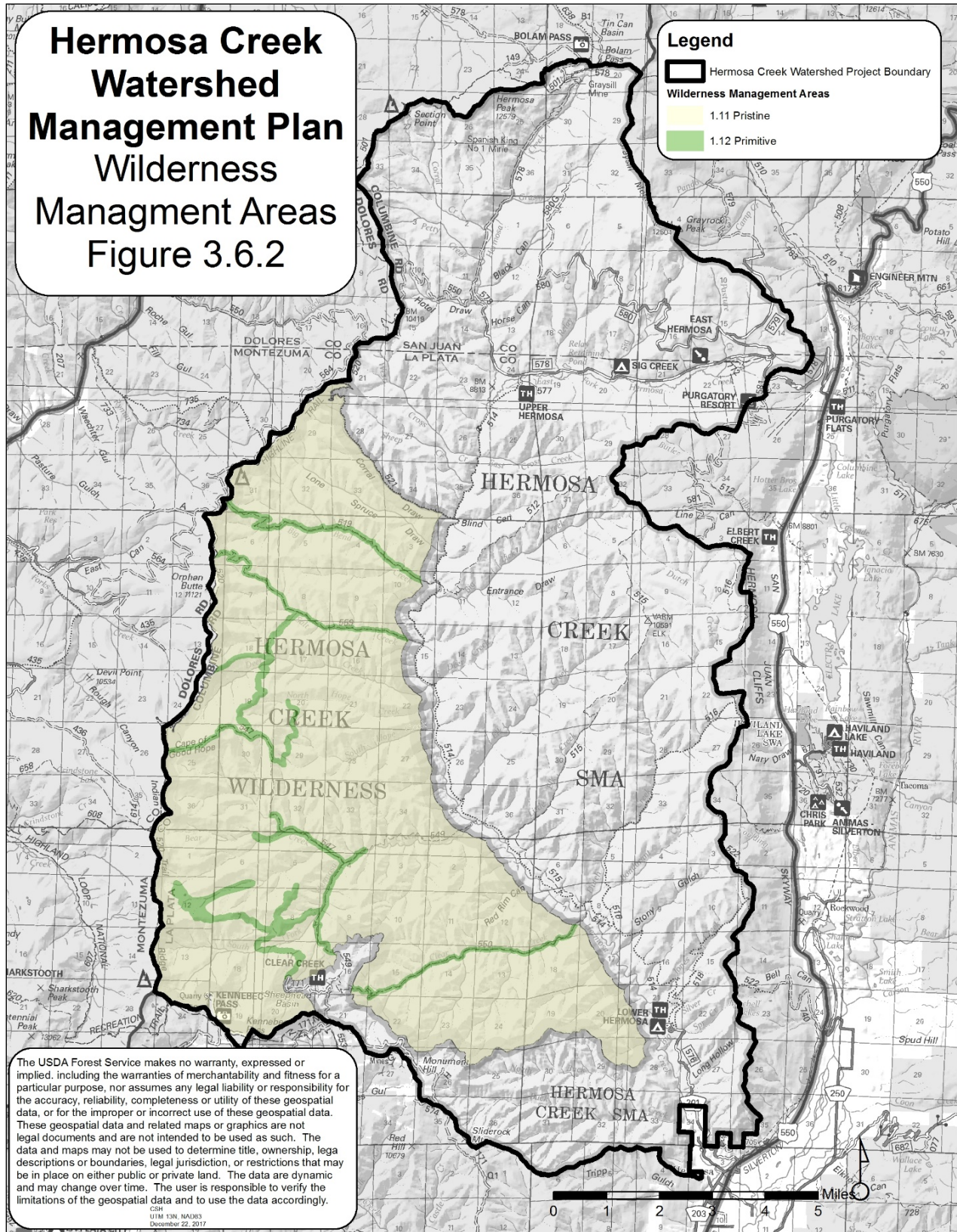
3.28.94 Adopt the guidelines from the SJNF Wilderness Management Direction, except camping and campfires are not permitted within 50 feet of streams or lakes because of terrain restrictions (instead of 100' as in the Weminuche).

Figure 3.6 Wilderness and Recommended Wilderness in the LRMP is amended to add the designated Hermosa Creek Wilderness. This is a non-discretionary administrative change necessary to comply with the legislative designation. Additionally, the figure is amended to remove all previously-recommended wilderness in the watershed from recommendation (6,200 acres).

Figure 3.6.1. Management Prescription Areas within the Hermosa Wilderness is added to the SJNF Wilderness Management Direction (SJNF 1998). This figure depicts Management Prescriptions 1.11 and 1.12, as described in the Wilderness Management Direction.



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 3.6.1 Wilderness and Recommended Wilderness



HCW Detail, Amended FIGURE 3.6.2. Hermosa Creek Wilderness Management Prescriptions

Table 3.28.3 shows the allowable, prohibited, and restricted management activities and uses for the Hermosa Creek Watershed. The allowable uses in the following table are not all-inclusive.

Table 3.28.3. Allowable Uses in Hermosa Creek Watershed

| Management Activities and Use | Wilderness | RNA | East Hermosa Area & Roadless Areas | Remainder of the SMA |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Fire managed for resource benefit | Allowed | Allowed | Allowed | Allowed except within the ski area. |
| Prescribed burning | Restricted - allowed as in LRMP | Restricted - allowed as in LRMP | Allowed | Allowed |
| Mechanical fuels treatment | Prohibited | Prohibited | Restricted—allowed as in Roadless Rule | Allowed |
| Timber production (scheduled on a rotation basis) | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited |
| Timber harvesting as a tool | Prohibited | Prohibited | Restricted—allowed as in Roadless Rule | Restricted to purposes of the legislation |
| Commercial use of special forest products and firewood | Prohibited | Prohibited | Restricted—allowed as in Roadless Rule | Restricted to purposes of the legislation |
| Lands Special Use authorizations, ROWs and utility corridors. | Restricted - allowed as in LRMP | Restricted to purposes of the RNA. | Restricted—allowed as in Roadless Rule | Restricted to purposes of the legislation |
| Recreation Special Uses | Restricted to Outfitter/Guides | Restricted to Outfitter/Guides | Allowed | Allowed. Ski area uses managed under the SUP and annual operating plans. |
| Livestock grazing (term permits) | Prohibited by previous NEPA decision, except Divide Allot. | Prohibited by previous NEPA decision | Allowed | Allowed |
| Facilities | Restricted - allowed as in LRMP | Prohibited | Restricted—allowed as in Roadless Rule | Allowed |
| Motorized transport (summer) | Prohibited | Prohibited | Restricted to designated routes | Restricted to designated routes |
| Motorized transport (winter) | Prohibited | Prohibited | Restricted to designated areas | Restricted to designated areas |
| Mechanical transport (summer) | Prohibited | Prohibited | Restricted to designated routes | Restricted to designated routes |
| Mechanical transport (winter) | Prohibited | Prohibited | Restricted to designated routes or areas | Restricted to designated routes or areas |
| Non-motorized transport (summer and winter) | Allowed | Allowed | Allowed | Allowed |
| Road construction (permanent or temporary) | Prohibited | Prohibited | Restricted—allowed as in Roadless Rule | Allowed |
| Minerals – leasable federal (oil and gas, and other) | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited - except for A and B, and valid existing rights |
| Minerals – locatable federal | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited - except for Parcels A and B, and valid existing rights |
| Minerals – saleable federal (materials) | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited | Prohibited - except for Parcels A and B, valid existing rights and admin. use |

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