

USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region
About Bighorn National Forest Recreation

March 21, 2007 Proposed Niche Statement (for coming decade)

Mountain Wildflowers and Wildlife in the Wild West

Emphasis Statement: Rising between the Powder River and Big Horn Basins, this scenic country offers year round recreation connecting visitors to a land rich in history and solitude. For centuries the mountain landscape has provided renewal for Native Americans, homesteaders and modern day explorers creating a human connection with this spectacular place. Today there is a bond with “the mountain” for local residents, which contributes to the quality of life in local communities. Viewing scenery and wildlife, while incorporating a rich history, connects locals and travelers to this accessible landscape.

Forest-wide Settings, Special Places, and Values: The Bighorn National Forest is a high elevation island of peaks, surrounded by expansive meadows and forests, accessed by canyons, that provides year round recreation. Clean air and water in this arid landscape are highly valued. A network of scenic drives is the backbone for recreation and provides popular travel-through routes between the Black Hills National Forest and Yellowstone National Park. Grazing, logging and recreation are an integral part of this place and have shaped the culture and the land. Quiet, solitude and scenery abound contributing to the quality of life that draws people to this place.

Developed/Scenery – See the country from Scenic Byways and back-ways – view mountain wildlife and wildflowers in the wild west. Spend a day or stay a while.

Remote – This setting is characterized by outstanding places, peaks, mountain meadows and canyons with opportunities for solitude. It includes the proposed Little Big Horn Wild and Scenic River, Devils Canyon, Walker Prairie, the Cloud Peak Wilderness and significant back-country areas.

General Forest – Management emphasis is on producing food and fiber while providing for dispersed recreation and scenic viewing.

Forest-wide Activities/Opportunities/Experiences: The Forest offers a mix of day-use and overnight recreation in support of traditional activities including driving for pleasure, viewing scenery and wildlife, fishing, camping and snowmobiling. Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use is accommodated on designated routes.

Developed/Scenery – Recreation use is concentrated in this setting with an emphasis on developed facilities and day use. Key activities include driving for pleasure, viewing scenery and wildlife and interpretation. RV camping with hook-ups is provided primarily by resorts located on or near the forest.

Remote – This setting provides non-motorized adventure including hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding.

General Forest -- This setting provides opportunities for activities such as hunting, hiking, gathering forest products, OHV riding, snowmobiling and dispersed camping.

Primary Visitors

Locals	Regular visitors from surrounding communities
Regional	Visitors from WY, MT,SD
National	Visitors from across the country with a significant number from the upper mid-west (ND,SD,MN,WI,MI)

Big Horn NF Niche Bridge for Developed Recreation
Niche Emphasis: Viewing scenery and wildlife, heritage, year round recreation

SETTING NAMES		Developed/Scenery Priority for dev recreation		Remote		General Forest	
SETTING DESCRIPTION		Byways and back-ways		Wilderness, proposed Wild and Scenic River, back-country		Resource management activities are common.	
SITE FUNCTION/THEME		Concentrate impacts of recreation.		Transfer point from one setting to another.		Minimal service and facilities to protect the resource.	
KEY ACTIVITIES		Developed day use, driving for pleasure, viewing scenery and wildlife, interpretation.		Hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding.		Hunting, hiking, gathering forest products, OHV riding, snowmobiling.	
INFRASTRUCTURE	SITE TYPE/ DEVELOPMENT SCALE	Site Type	Dev Scale	Site Type	Dev Scale	Site Type	Dev Scale
		Trailheads	2-3			Trailheads	2-3
		Campgrounds	2-3	Trailheads	2-3	Warming Huts	2-3
		Interpretive Sites	2-3				
		Visitor Centers	3-4				
		Fishing and boating sites	2-3				
	SITE CAPACITY Low: < 50 PAOTs Medium: 50 – 100 High: >100	Low - Medium for back-ways Medium – High for Byways		Low - Medium		Low-Medium	

Programmatic Strategies: