



Management Area Quick Look

The following Management Area (MA) descriptions are included in this handout:

- 1. Diverse Forest Uses**
- 2. Remote Backcountry 6.1**
- 3. Backcountry Motorized 6.2**
- 4. Escarpment 8.X/6.X**
- 5. Alpine/Subalpine Special Area 8.X**
- 6. Wilderness**
- 7. Ski Areas**
- 8. Special areas**
- 9. National Recreation Areas**
- 10. Research Natural Areas**
- 11. Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers**
- 12. Ski Area Expansion 9.3**
- 13. Wildlife Habitat or Secluded Wildlife Habitat**

Definition:

Backcountry – The National Park Service uses the term “backcountry” to refer to primitive, undeveloped portions of parks. This is not a specific management zone, but rather refers to a general condition of land that may occur anywhere within a park.

1. Diverse Forest Uses

Major Emphasis:

- Provide high quality sawtimber and other timber products on a sustained yield basis
- Provide a mix of habitats for wildlife species, including deer wintering habitat
- Provide a wide range of recreation opportunities, from low-use hiking trails to motorized use trails to developed campgrounds

Desired Future Condition:

- Mix of deciduous and coniferous forest stands varied in size, shape, height and species
- Use of even-aged and uneven-aged silviculture to meet timber, ecological, visual, and recreation objectives
- Most stands will provide high quality sawtimber
- Suitable habitat will be provided for a variety of wildlife and plant species, and will include a sustainable mix of young and mature forest at the landscape level
- Deer wintering habitat will be emphasized in mostly conifer stands designated by Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife
- There will be permanent and temporary openings consistent with scenic objectives
- Forest communities that would naturally be present, such as aspen and oak, will be retained and enhanced where feasible
- Along major road corridors, large diameter trees of varied species will predominate
- There will be numerous views of broad, changing landscapes
- Views, ecological processes, and management practices will be interpreted at many stationary vista sites

Compatible Uses:

- A wide-range of recreation opportunities may include low-use hiking trails to possible inclusion of motorized recreation, potentially including ATVs on designated trails
- Possible wind turbine sites for electric generation
- Horse and mountain bike recreation
- Timber harvesting
- Surface disturbing mineral activities
- Utility corridors
- Developed recreation facilities
- New roads and trails

Incompatible Uses:

- Winter recreation opportunities generally would not be compatible with deer wintering areas

2. Remote Backcountry Forest (6.1)

Major Emphasis:

- Large expanses of relatively undisturbed landscapes where terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems develop under natural disturbance regimes
- Management actions are limited to those that help restore or maintain natural processes, natural communities, and associated species
- Public use managed to help keep species or processes within their natural range of variation, or have minimal effect on the area's integrity
- Hiking, backpacking, and foot-trail recreational opportunities will be available which will provide a relative sense of isolation and remoteness
- Similar to Wilderness except: 1) Mechanized equipment allowed for admin. uses (i.e. trail maintenance), 2) Ecological restoration may occur, 3) Active management of cultural heritage sites, 4) Management activities allowed to conserve or protect TES species

Desired Future Condition:

- Extensive areas of northern hardwoods and conifers, varied in size, age, and appearance
- Little evidence of human development
- Accessible by foot and other non-motorized means of transport around trail corridors
- Recreation facilities, such as fire rings, may be present but will be primitive
- Away from trails, evidence of, and interaction with, other users will be low
- Recreational impacts will be managed to protect natural resources, to minimize visual disturbance, and to preserve a sense of "wildness"
- Changes in vegetation will predominantly be the result of natural processes
- Management activities may be used to conserve and protect populations of threatened, endangered, or sensitive species (TES)
- Ecological restoration may occur through control of non-native invasive species, removal of forest plantations, road closures, maintenance of deer wintering areas, anadromous and native inland fish stocking, and aquatic habitat restoration
- Small and unique wildlife habitat features, such as apple orchards, may be maintained

Compatible Uses:

- Non-motorized Recreation: mountain bikes, horse use, and sled dogs on designated trails, hiking, snowshoeing, and x-c skiing
- Control of non-native invasive species (plants, animals, insects, and disease)
- Maintenance of existing overlooks and vistas
- Removal of forest plantations
- Aquatic habitat restoration
- Research
- Fire use within ecosystems naturally regulated by fire
- Motorized equipment for admin. use

Incompatible Uses:

- Motorized recreation
- Wind and communication tower development
- Surface oil, gas, and mineral exploration and development
- Road-building
- Utility corridors
- Construction of non-recreational facilities
- Control of native insects and disease
- Prescribed fire in ecosystems not naturally regulated by fire

3. Backcountry Motorized (6.2)

Major Emphasis:

- A range of recreational opportunities that occur in more remote areas
- Winter motorized recreation, and potentially summer motorized trail use.
- Long rotation (150+) timber harvests
- Range of vegetation age classes

Desired Future Condition:

- Stands will vary in tree species, size, age, and appearance
- In areas less used by recreationists, activities such as timber harvesting may be evident, but will be scattered over time and space
- When viewed from a distance, human activity would not be evident on some of the upper elevations of sensitive peaks and ridges
- Evidence of activity may be noticeable on lower levels, but will blend with surroundings
- Roads will be of a low maintenance standard, and unimproved
- Some areas of undisturbed forest will have many large, old trees with a few scattered openings created by wind, ice, old age or other natural forces.
- Application of timber and vegetation management would provide more clearings and early successional habitats than would occur from natural disturbances. This provides a wider diversity of habitats for wildlife.

Compatible Uses:

- Snowmobile trails
- Potentially including ATVs
- Non-motorized Recreation: mountain bikes, horse use, and sled dogs on designated trails, hiking, snowshoeing, and x-c skiing
- New temporary roads may be built, but would be closed and restored at project completion
- New trail systems may be built
- Permanent openings will be maintained
- Wood fiber would be available, with constraints below
- Constraints on timber harvesting including extended rotation, fewer intermediate cultural treatments, and other modifications to benefit backcountry settings

Incompatible Uses:

- Roads built to a high standard for permanent addition to the Forest Roads system
- Timber harvests and other human disturbances dominating the landscape
- Cell phone towers and wind-powered turbines

4. Escarpment (6. X or 8.X)

Major Emphasis:

- Management of natural communities along the escarpment, the western boundary of the Forest. Several of these natural communities are rare or uncommon, and provide habitat for trees, herbs, and ferns considered rare or uncommon on the Forest or within the State.
- Active management of natural community diversity to maintain and enhance populations of rare or uncommon plant and animal populations

Desired Future Condition:

- Diverse array of natural communities and stages of vegetation development
- Steep cliffs and outcrops frequently dominate this management area
- Oaks and hemlock mixed with northern hardwoods will form the dominant vegetation
- Areas of large, older trees will be interspersed with regenerating areas, small patch communities, woodland, and open types
- Rare and uncommon community types will exist
- Vegetation management to maintain some of these communities may require the use of commercial and non-commercial tree harvesting, and fire
- Experimentation with a variety of traditional and experimental silvicultural practices for management of the forested natural communities will be evident
- Both non-motorized dispersed use and winter motorized trail use is allowed
- Levels of use will range from high use to low use areas, and management will emphasize maintaining this range
- Interaction between users will vary by season, evidence of recreation will be evident (i.e. trail signs)
- Heritage resource areas may be developed for education and interpretation purposes

Compatible Uses:

- Vegetation management for maintenance of vegetation objectives
- Fire management for maintenance of vegetation objectives
- Existing non-motorized and winter motorized recreation opportunities (and associated roads and trails), except when in conflict with the conservation goals of this management area
- Research
- Mountain bike recreation
- New road construction (Class 1 or 2 type) only if it furthers the conservation goals of the area
- Existing utility corridors
- NNIS management
- Rock climbing, unless posted as closed

Incompatible Uses:

- Horse recreation
- Wind and communication tower development
- Surface oil, gas, and mineral exploration and development
- New utility corridors
- Control of native insects and disease
- New motorized trails

5. Alpine and Subalpine Special Area (8.X)

Major Emphasis:

- To recognize, conserve, and interpret the alpine and subalpine zone (between 3500' to over 4000'), and its associated ecological values, along the northern Green Mountain ridgeline.

Desired Future Condition:

- The areas will continue to be dominated by low growing alpine and subalpine plants mixed with bedrock, talus, or gravel
- Broad vegetation groupings include heath barrens and heath-krummholz
- Species that are unique to these habitats, such as Bigelow's sedge and Bicknell's thrush, will be found here
- Changes in vegetation will be primarily the result of natural processes
- Management of the alpine and subalpine areas will recognize and conserve the cultural values of Native Americans inherent to these lands
- Evidence of human activity will be limited to primarily hiking trails
- Recreational facilities such as ski trails and lift lines will be limited, as will other administrative facilities, such as towers
- There will be no new roads on the Forest in this area
- The primary recreational uses will be hiking and winter orienteering
- This habitat is particularly fragile and vulnerable on the National Forest. It represents the southern-most extension of these communities in Vermont, and so is of very limited extent

Compatible Uses:

- Hiking
- Existing facilities and roads
- Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing on trails
- Further use restrictions may be applicable based on monitoring
- Vegetation and recreation management to perpetuate these natural communities
- Interpretive signage
- Sled dogs on trails, though unlikely in this area

Incompatible Uses:

- New cell and wind towers
- Open campfires
- New facilities and roads
- Motorized recreation
- Horse and mountain bike use

6. Wilderness

Major Emphasis:

- Managed to promote and perpetuate the wilderness character of the land and its specific values of solitude, physical and mental challenge, scientific study, inspiration, and primitive recreation

Existing Wilderness: Bristol Cliffs, Lye Brook, Breadloaf, Peru Peak, George D. Aiken, and Big Branch

Desired Future Condition:

- Stands will include large, mature or over mature hardwoods and conifers with extensive areas of old growth vegetation
- Some openings will occur following natural disturbance
- No evidence of human development except for old roads, stonewalls, cellar holes, and the like which have been overgrown and dilapidated by natural forces
- Managed to provide primitive recreation opportunities

Compatible Uses:

- High visual sensitivity standards
- Hand built structures may be built to control erosion
- Fish stocking may continue in lakes where it has historically been done, with potential limits to methods to accomplish stocking
- Hunting, fishing, x/c skiing, hiking, and wheelchairs

Incompatible Uses:

- Timber harvest
- Roads and utility corridors
- Mineral leasing
- Motorized recreation
- Mechanized recreation
- Shelters
- Competitive Events
- Commercial uses not dependant on Wilderness
- Maintained wildlife openings
- Maintenance of viewpoints

7. Ski Areas

Major Emphasis:

- Wide recreation opportunities requiring highly developed structures or facilities
- Habitat will support low to moderate populations and a variety of wildlife tolerant of high levels of human activity

Desired Future Condition:

- Human sights and sounds will be very evident
- Facilities to handle high numbers of people will be available
- Mostly native, but also exotic vegetation will be used for landscaping
- Little physical evidence of timber management

Compatible Uses:

- Roads capable of supporting moderate to high numbers of vehicles
- Downhill Skiing
- Horse, Mountain bike and snowmobile recreation

Incompatible Uses:

- Surface disturbing mineral activities

8. Special areas

***Each Special Area has an individualized management plan, and therefore they vary by major emphasis, desired future conditions, and compatible and incompatible uses. In general however, the following apply for all Special Areas:**

Major Emphasis:

- Protect areas of national significance that have uncommon or outstanding biological, geological, recreational, cultural, or historical significance
- Preserve unique ecosystems for scientific purposes
- Provide areas to conduct research to improve the benefits of forests
- Preserve these areas for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations

Current Special Areas on the GMNF include: Long Trail/Appalachian Trail, White Rocks NRA, Grout Pond, The Cape, Mount Horrid, Texas Falls, Crystal Brook Glacial Kettle, Robert Frost Interpretive trail, Beaver Meadows/Abbey Pond, Mount Abraham, Remote or high elevation ponds, Rattlesnake Point, Cranberry Bog

Desired Future Condition:

- The size of the area, type of vegetation, wildlife, and recreation opportunities depend on the uncommon or outstanding characteristics to be protected
- Special areas have one or more of the following features:
 - Plant communities with unique qualities
 - Threatened or endangered plant and animal species habitats
 - Scenic waterfalls, cascades, and other uncommon geologic attractions
 - Significant historical or cultural sites
 - Uncommon features for the Green Mountain National Forest

Compatible Uses:

- Vary by area

Incompatible Uses:

- Vary by area

9. National Recreation Areas (NRAs)

***Each NRA has an individualized management plan, and therefore they vary by major emphasis, desired future conditions, and compatible and incompatible uses. In general however, the following apply for all NRAs:**

Major Emphasis:

- NRAs are areas that have outstanding combinations of outdoor recreation opportunities, aesthetic attractions, and proximity to potential users. They may also have cultural, historical, archaeological, pastoral, wilderness, scientific, wildlife, and other values contributing to public enjoyment.
- Management for these areas is determined in the Public Law that creates the area and by the subsequent management plan.

Current NRAs on the GMNF include: White Rocks National Recreation Area

Desired Future Condition:

- General objectives for managing NRAs established by law are to:
 1. Provide a showcase for National Forest management standards.
 2. Provide for public enjoyment of the area for outdoor recreation or other benefits.
 3. Protect the special values and attributes of the area (that is, scenic, cultural, historic, wilderness, wildlife, or other values) that contribute to public enjoyment.
 4. Manage for any other resource values present in the area, in a manner that does not impair the public recreation values or the special attributes of the area.

Compatible Uses:

- Vary by area

Incompatible Uses:

- Vary by area

10. Research Natural Areas

Major Emphasis:

- Protect areas for the purposes of maintaining biological diversity, conducting non-manipulative research and monitoring, and fostering education
- Preserve our Nation's natural heritage for future generations
- Designated to be permanently protected and maintained in natural condition
- Include areas with:
 - Unique ecosystems or ecological features
 - Rare or sensitive species of plants and animals and their habitat
 - High-quality examples of widespread ecosystems
- RNAs are administered jointly by the National Forest System (National Forests) and Forest Service Research

Desired Future Condition:

- Because they are protected in a natural state, RNA's provide valuable opportunities for monitoring of long-term ecological change, and comparison of the effects of resource management activities against unmanaged controls

Compatible Uses:

- Non-manipulative research and monitoring activities are encouraged and can be compared with manipulative studies conducted in other areas.
- Low-impact educational activities
- Existing trails may be maintained at minimal maintenance
- Special uses not affecting the purpose of the RNA
- Archaeological excavation when it won't diminish the purposes of RNA designation
- Control of insects, disease, or invasive plants only when justified by loss of resource values outside the RNA
- Pesticide control only when justified by significant losses of resource values on bordering public or private lands; chemical control only via direct application
- Manual control of insects and disease
- Biological controls only when deemed more effective than other control methods

Incompatible Uses:

- Structures
- Surface disturbance for mineral activity
- Commercial or recreational mineral activity
- Motorized trail use
- Habitat management unless it is to meet the area's objectives
- Communication sites
- Wind towers, cell towers
- Timber management
- Broadcast application of pesticides

11. Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers

Major Emphasis:

- Possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values
- The idea is not to halt development and use of a river; instead, the goal is to preserve the character of a river
- Primary emphasis shall be given to protecting aesthetic, scenic, historic, archaeological, and scientific features

Desired Future Condition:

- Shall be preserved in free-flowing condition
- Designated rivers and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations

Compatible Uses:

- Uses compatible with the management goals of a particular river are allowed; change is expected to happen
- Development or activities not damaging to the outstanding resources of a designated river, or curtailing its free flowing nature, are usually allowed

Incompatible Uses:

- Dams
- Activities or development that would affect the outstanding or remarkable value that made the river eligible
- Activities or development that would change a river's potential classification as either Wild, Scenic, or Recreational

12. Ski Area Expansion 9.3

Major Emphasis:

- Maintains the potential of lands for existing ski area expansion

Compatible Uses:

- Hunting
- Hiking
- Cross country skiing
- Trails will be maintained for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities, no new recreation trails will be constructed

Incompatible Uses:

- Habitat improvements
- Surface disturbing mineral activities

13. Wildlife Habitat or Secluded Wildlife Habitat

Major Emphasis:

- Provide a mix of different-aged forest habitats for wildlife species, from early succession to mature forests.
- Employ a full range of timber management as the primary tool for habitat manipulation.
- De-emphasize recreation uses to minimize disturbance to wildlife.

Compatible Uses:

- Timber harvesting
- Low-impact, non-motorized, non-trail Recreation
- Snowmobiles on existing corridor trails
- Control of non-native invasive species (plants, animals, insects, and disease)
- Aquatic habitat restoration
- Research
- Fire use within ecosystems naturally regulated by fire
- Motorized equipment for administrative use
- Utility corridors
- Temporary skid roads/trails for extraction of logs, closed at end of project

Incompatible Uses:

- Winter recreation generally would not be compatible with deer wintering areas
- New roads and trails
- Motorized recreation beyond existing corridor snowmobile trails
- Construction of non-recreational facilities
- Developed recreation facilities