

MULTIPLE-USE MANAGEMENT FOR RECREATION IN THE EAST

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ABSTRACT. An overview of the complex management problems that confront the administrator of National Forest lands in the eastern United States, with emphasis on the conflicts that occur and will intensify as a result of the many demands for different kinds of recreation opportunities on National Forest System lands. The need to identify and measure the kinds of recreation opportunities these lands can provide is brought out, together with their relationships to lands of other ownership providing other kinds of recreation opportunities.

COMPLEXITY AND DIVERSITY characterize the Eastern Region of the United States. Within each physiographic province there are wide variations in soils, topography, vegetation, water, and climate. Such variations lead to great differences in patterns of land use and in the mixture of manufacturing, mining, and commerce as well as the outdoor recreation opportunities these lands afford.

The East is also characterized by a complex and diverse populace. The trend toward migration from rural to urban living is perhaps greater in this region than anywhere else. Certainly the East has greater life-style contrasts than any other section of the country. Every major city has its affluent suburbs and its ghettos. Some of the rural countryside is made up of pleasant, prosperous farms just one drainage removed from a "tobacco road."

Obviously people living in these varying cultures have differing needs and wants. The ghetto dweller is not nearly as interested in opportunities for outdoor recreation as he is in bettering his living conditions.

A worker is not anxious to end air pollution if it also means an end to his job. The affluent suburban dweller wants more and better highways, not only to speed his travel to and from work, thereby giving him more time to recreate, but also to help speed him away from congested areas for a quiet weekend of solitude before hurrying back to the city with its pollution, ulcers, noise, dented fenders, nameless neighbors, and X-rated movies.

THE FOREST LAND

Throughout the heterogeneous mix of development and cultures lie the National Forests of the East. They occupy only 2.6 percent of the land area in the region. Twenty states are included within the bounds of the region, and 13 of them have National Forest lands. One of the most significant statistics having a bearing upon the management of these National Forests is that over half of the population of the United States lives within this area (fig. 1).

Almost every state within the region owns and manages some forest land. Four

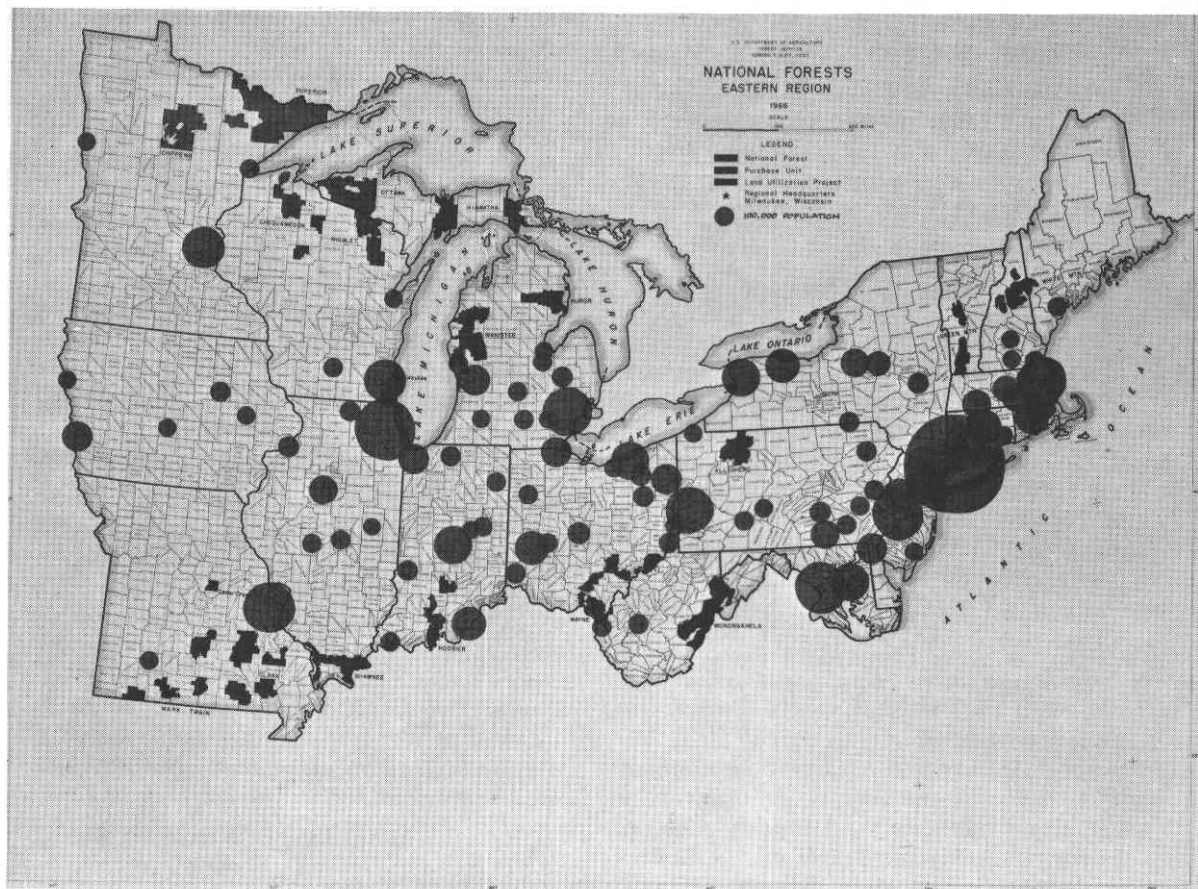


Figure 1.—Population centers in the Eastern Region of the Forest Service. Each circle shows a population of at least 100,000 people—the larger the circle, the greater the population.

(Minnesota, Michigan, New York, and Pennsylvania) each have more than 1 million acres, most of which is forested. Together with local governments, the states in the East control approximately 12 percent of the forested land. This compares with the 6 percent of forested land making up the National Forests. Nine percent, or half again as much, is owned by forest industries, but 70 percent—think of it, nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ —is in private ownership of tracts of less than 500 acres held by some 2,000,000 different owners.

What these statistics mean is that there is a crying need for coordinated resource planning of all forested lands in the East. This is especially true when related to how

these lands provide recreation opportunities for the millions of people living in the area.

Over the years, the Forest Service has tried to be all things to all people—especially in providing outdoor recreation. We found a need for large and highly developed campgrounds—so we built them. We responded to the need for wilderness opportunities to the extent we had lands with the characteristics of wilderness. We have done our best to keep pace with the demand for winter-sports activities. Power boating surged in popularity in the late 1950's and 60's, so the Forest Service moved to satisfy demands for recreation opportunities for power boating, water skiing,

and related sports. The list of recreation activities people engage in on the National Forests goes on and on.

Actually, the fact that National Forest lands have such diverse characteristics is the main reason why they are found attractive by so many people interested in so many different kinds of recreation.

A TIME OF CONFLICT

But we are rapidly approaching a time of conflict between these varied interests. We are in the throes of conflict between the harvest of commodity resources and the so called "social amenities" provided on our wild lands. In speaking before a group of top-level Forest Service planners and managers, Dr. Brad Hainesworth referred to multiple use as "the management of conflicts". I think this is a very apt description.

Certain kinds of recreation activity conflict with the habits of wildlife; so recreation activities must be curtailed or adjusted. Unrestricted clearcutting conflicts with aesthetics and requires adjustments in harvesting methods. And the list goes on. Hardly a management task can be undertaken that does not result in a conflict with one or more of other benefits or uses of National Forest lands.

Since the early 1900's major changes in the landscape of the East have been caused by the construction and mining industries. New housing, water impoundments, airports, highways, shopping centers, factories, etc., have made substantial impacts on the forested and other rural lands in this highly concentrated area of population. Also, the region has more surface mining than other regions. Yet the proportion of cropland reverting to woodland is higher than anywhere else except in parts of the South.

Shorter working hours, greater affluence, and improved transportation systems allow more and more people to participate in outdoor recreation. These participation rates are further accelerated through merchandising efforts of manufacturers of sporting equipment, owners of resorts, and real-estate developers. The influence of

merchandising has been particularly noticeable in winter recreation activity participation rates. At the October 1968 Northeastern Snowmobile Conference in Boston, the International Snowmobile Industry Association revealed that five states have 70 percent of the Nation's snowmobiles: Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Wisconsin, and Maine, in that order. Contacts with sales personnel for this industry reveal that the same proportion still exists; and if anything, sales rates for these five states are slightly higher than in the rest of the Nation.

MULTIPLE USE

The National Forests are managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield to insure utilization of the various renewable resources, in a combination that will best meet the needs of the American people, without impairment of the productivity of the land. If we were to oversimplify the definition of multiple-use planning, we could characterize it as an allocation of resources to use combinations by intuition, judgment, and physical characteristics ascertained by inventories.

It is in the inventory phase that we find the greatest deficiencies. Though we have sound inventories of commercial timber, soil surveys on many areas, and general locations of potential recreation-development sites, there are many serious gaps in our basic resource inventories, especially capacities of the land to provide dispersed recreation opportunities. This paucity of data is serious and could contribute to inaccuracies in planning or management decisions that are improper and irrevocable.

As demands for products and services from National Forest lands increase, we find ourselves faced with what Dr. Marshall Goldman of Wellesley College defines as an "environmental disruption". Dr. Goldman attributes part of our difficulty to the fact that Americans have often been unsure of the goal they were pursuing. Some are seeking purity of air and water; some are concerned only about air; others only about water—without understanding that the environment must be considered as a coordinated whole.

In other words, the ecological system is self-contained. The output of a process becomes the input of a subsequent operation. When one of the outputs is released in such quantities that it cannot be absorbed adequately as an input by other processes, we would normally end up with an environmental disruption. Avoiding such environmental disruptions requires the greatest skill and perception in practicing multiple-use management.

This brings us back to Dr. Hainesworth's definition of multiple use being the management of conflict. I have already referred to one of the conflicts between utilization of a commodity resource and social amenity values. In my opinion, these conflicts—between the use of land by people for recreation and the harvesting of commodity resources—will be temporary. They can and will be solved through more careful land-use planning and by adopting techniques for harvesting commodity resources that are acceptable to the public.

PEOPLE VS. PEOPLE

But there is another conflict that will be much more difficult to resolve. This is what I like to refer to as the people-versus-people conflict. It concerns the conflicts brought about by growth and diversity of various recreation uses of wild lands. Bennie Swift of the National Wildlife Federation said a few years ago, "The recreationist is rapidly overgrazing his pasture and is becoming a greater menace than logging".

Rapidly increasing numbers of residents are purchasing small acreages in rural areas to serve as weekend retreats from noise, air pollution, and the routine daily urban life. Many professional and business people who became interested in ecological development of their properties place a high value on the amenities of the woodland environment. This desire for a contrast with the daily way of life is reflected elsewhere throughout the populace, and more and more people are interested in escaping to what the manager may term a "dispersed environment". People want to get away from the visible effects of man's actions.

This is what accounts for much of the anti-timber harvesting feeling. In respond-

ing to this drive, it is important for land managers to carefully plan all uses of wildlands. In speaking at a recreation seminar in Spokane, Washington, last March, Regional Forester Jay Cravens commented on how the recent controversy over timber-harvesting practices on the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia was a dramatic example of the changing attitudes about resource development. He went on to say that the most significant feature of this West Virginia experience was the way the public "cracked our bureaucratic installation," reaffirming their right to demand action. And through this experience we have also learned that being sensitive to public concern does not necessarily lead to compromise of professional expertise. On the contrary, in most instances, it tends to sharpen it.

We must be concerned not only with how commodity resources are managed on forested lands in relation to the use of these lands for social amenities, but also with the fact that full development of National Forest lands and waters for recreation opportunities in the East may not be in the best public interest.

WILDERNESS

There is only one small classified wilderness in this region—the Great Gulf in New Hampshire. The Boundary Waters Canoe Area, although an element of the Wilderness Preservation System, is not a true wilderness in that motors have been in use there for decades and, even now, are permitted on much of the area; and much of the area has been and is again being logged. There are no other tracts of National Forest land in this region having characteristics that qualify them as potential wilderness as defined by the Wilderness Act.

However, I believe that the majority of the populace in the East would be satisfied with much less than a "pure wilderness experience". In writing in the October 1970 issue of *Current History*, Ken Davis defined wilderness as a frame of mind. Regardless of the precise definition, in the mind of the visitor these are still wilderness experiences. With a few exceptions, the

few remaining tracts of land having the characteristics to provide this kind of recreation experience are within the National Forests of the East. It behooves us to preserve the proper use-capacity of such lands and not to automatically and carelessly respond to public pressure for more campgrounds, more boat ramps, more roads, and other improvements.

An example of one development that I think would be a misguided effort to solve a recreation problem concerns the South Branch of the Potomac River in the Spruce Knobs-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area. The stretch of this stream from the Smoke Hole to where it leaves the Forest, near Petersburg, is extremely scenic and fine for white-water canoeing. The one campground located in Smoke Hole canyon is literally bursting at the seams every weekend during the summer. Those who are successful in obtaining a camp unit for a summer weekend usually arrive by Thursday evening.

Now, it would be possible to solve this problem of overuse by developing additional campgrounds along a road, downstream. And these campgrounds would be used just as heavily as the present one in Smoke Hole Canyon. But in my opinion, opportunities for a "quality recreation experience" would be sacrificed through such development.

Another example where a response to demand for development could be a mistake is along the Kancamagus Highway in the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire. This is a scenic drive that attracts hundreds of thousands of recreation visitors each year, especially in the fall when the leaves have turned color. There are now six campgrounds along the highway. It is close to being overdeveloped at the present time. Any additional development will certainly begin to erode away the scenic quality that this drive was originally designed to enhance.

OVERUSE

It is also necessary to guard against overuse by hikers, cyclists, snowmobilers, indiscriminate campers, fishermen, and canoe-

ists. Also, it will be important to plan for people's use of land and water to avoid conflict or minimize it as much as practicable. There are already examples of such conflicts within the Eastern Region of the Forest Service.

One concerns the use of the Pine River on the Manistee National Forest in Lower Michigan. This stream attracts canoeists of all ages because the current moves swiftly without being dangerous, and the scenery is very attractive. Furthermore, there are eight canoe liveries with 600 canoes located along the upper reaches of the stream. The net result is that, on almost any weekend of the summer, the canoeing use of the stream is so heavy it is impossible for a trout fisherman to fish it during daylight hours. This would not be too serious except that the Pine River produces mainly brown trout, which the avid fisherman seeks in the early morning or late evening fishing hours, and the conflicts so far are not insurmountable.

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DRINK RIGHT FROM THE CAN; NO EMPTRIES TO RETURN

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EXCLUSIVE FEATURES

Opens like a bottle... easy to pour from
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And, of course—no deposits... protected from light... no deposits... no residues to return... easily quicker
takes up less space... no danger of breakage... sanitars—used once, thrown away... holds 12 fluid ounces, same as a bottle.

BEER IS BETTER in the can that opens like a bottle

Figure 2.—No empties to return: just throw 'em in the water or leave 'em on the beach! Ads like this do not discourage littering.

Another example of people-versus-people conflicts is in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA). Many people go to this unique area expecting to have a wilderness experience. Upon arriving there they find not only hundreds of similar canoe parties, but motorboats and much other evidence of man's presence. The BWCA is one area where the conflict of people versus people began over 40 years ago.

Figure 2 shows an ad run by Consolidated Can Corporation in *Hunting and Fishing Magazine* in 1936, in which they extolled the virtues of beer in cans and showed how convenient they are because once used they may be simply tossed away. Note that one picture in the ad shows a man in a boat throwing the can into the water. Beginning this year, visitors to the BWCA were prohibited from even having cans or glass containers in their possession.

DILEMMA

In the Sylvania area on the Ottawa National Forest, the Forest Service has been faced with the dilemma of trying to satisfy on one hand the desires of the preservationists who want no development of the area and on the other hand the local residents and other recreationists who would like to see full and complete development—including roads, highly developed sites, resorts, etc. Our final plan of management was not intended to be a compromise, but the result is an area where most recreation visitors can satisfy their particular needs without conflict with one another. Development is concentrated along the northern and western edges of the area (fig. 1), leaving the major acreage undeveloped except for canoe-access camps, hiking trails, and portages. This plan seems to be working out well.

There are other conflicts that must be dealt with in the management of Sylvania, and personnel on the Ottawa National Forest are doing a yeoman job of meeting these conflicts. The original management plan indicated that snowmobiling would be permitted in the area. Many of the groups who would like to see only nonmotorized use of Sylvania objected to this. However, after 2 years when snowmobiling was per-

mitted only on designated trails and adjacent lakes, there was no evidence of real conflict between various users of the area or between this mechanized use and resource productivity. However, there is still room for more refined studies of the effects of snowmobiles on the environment.

A few people have expressed concern about timber harvesting by selection-system cutting in overmature stands in Sylvania. However, one small sale was completed late in 1970; and a person can now traverse this area and not even be aware that it has recently been cut.

Having viewed the status of Sylvania during the past year, I am convinced that it is a fine example of management. There are some things that, using hindsight, we would do differently if we could begin again. But none is really serious although they are noted and are used in adjusting management of not only Sylvania but also other areas.

NEED FOR PLANNING

The problems are really complex. And what about the solutions? Very simply, the answer is good planning. Furthermore, to achieve good planning, there are two related basic necessities: coordination with plans for states, other agencies, and private lands; and the gathering of better data.

Earlier I mentioned the great diversity of land ownership in the Eastern States. All these lands provide some form of recreation for varying segments of the populace. Many of them are being developed to enhance recreation opportunities. Such development on state, county, and municipal lands has accelerated rapidly in recent years as government appropriations have become available under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, grants and loans from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and similar programs.

The recreation opportunities that lands in other ownerships can and do provide are significant, and the management of the National Forest system must complement and not unnecessarily duplicate these opportunities if the total recreation demand is to be met.

The conflicts between users indicate that

forest acres are nonexpandable. What recreation should the Forest Service provide—and for what people? Since the National Forests have the little remaining undeveloped forested lands in the East, it seems readily apparent that management efforts should be directed toward maintaining the capacity to provide the optimum amount of dispersed recreation opportunities.

First, as a general rule, developments should be installed only to enhance these dispersed recreation opportunities. Most of the lands owned privately or by state and local governments are along the major routes of travel or in the vicinity of cities and towns. Consequently they lend themselves better to the development of recreation facilities for the transient visitor. But this is not the total answer, because all lands obviously do not fit this convenient mold. Therefore, the answer is coordinated planning between landowners, analyzing the uses the lands are best suited to provide and then, as the young folks say today, “getting it all together.”

Second, we need better statistical and inventory data. We simply do not have an adequate description and measure of the resources. In some areas there is a good timber inventory; we are beginning to get a reasonably good picture of the wildlife population and habitat; a better soils inventory is under way, and water quality is being pinpointed—at least in suspected polluted waters. But there are many gaps in the availability of resource data.

DATA NEEDED

One of the greatest voids in available data is a description of the recreation re-

source, including measurement of the quality of land and water to provide recreation opportunities. Also, we simply cannot do effective planning without some measurement of the capacity, both social and physical, of these lands and waters to provide quality recreation. Optimum mix of production from all forest resources in any size of ecosystem is not static and requires the best possible scientific management.

The last ten years have provided more meaningful recreation research than ever before; yet these efforts are barely keeping pace with the increase in traditional recreational activities, not to mention activities not even contemplated 20 years ago. Modern technology is producing new forms and means of recreation faster than research can provide data with which the land manager can meet these demands for recreation opportunities.

Snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, lightweight motorcycles, and similar recreation vehicles are causing conflicts that will require carefully considered management decisions. Hovercraft are on the horizon, and they may be the recreation vehicle of the future. Yet too many of the decisions being made today in relation to these new recreation pursuits are made on the basis of inadequate study and research. We simply do not have facts.

As the saying goes, “We’ve come a long way, baby.” But renewed efforts are necessary if we are to meet the challenges ahead. The reassuring thing is that no one is giving up. This symposium and other similar efforts will help to make it possible for the administrator of the future to meet problems and opportunities more fully assured that his management will be successful.