

Chapter III

Management Prescriptions

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Changes to Chapter III Between the Proposed and Final Plans

Introduction – We added a section to clarify how we intend to manage the development features (roads, pipeline corridors, etc.) that form the boundaries of undeveloped areas.

Management Prescriptions – Area description numbers were updated for all MPs due to the minor shifts in MP allocations from Alternative 2 to Alternative 2 Modified.

MP 4.1 – In response to comments, we changed the name of this prescription to “Spruce and Spruce-Hardwood Ecosystem Management”. We updated vegetation management objectives.

MP 5.0 – In response to comments, we made a number of minor editorial, clarification, or consistency changes to all sections of this MP. We deleted Standard 5020 as the concern was already covered under direction for Vegetation. We deleted Guideline 5045 as it appeared to conflict with Forest Service Manual direction. We added direction to Transportation System Planning for clarification and consistency.

MP 5.1 - In response to comments, we made a number of minor editorial, consistency, or clarification changes to all sections of this MP. We deleted Standard 5008 as the concern was already covered under Standard 5010. We added a Wildlife Management guideline to clarify that maintenance of existing improvements may continue. We deleted Standard 5127 because it seemed to imply that we control fish stocking. We moved Standard 5138 to Forest-wide direction. We added direction to Vegetation, Fire, and Transportation System Planning for clarification and consistency.

MP 6.1 – In response to comments, we added information and direction to clarify our management intent in mixed pine-oak stands. We added a desired condition table for general forest types for consistency. We updated Vegetation management objectives and added an objective for Indiana bat habitat management. We deleted the prescribed fire objective 6144 because this concern was better addressed in the Forest-wide management direction.

MP 6.2 - In response to comments, we made a number of minor editorial, consistency, or clarification changes to all sections of this MP. We added three areas to this MP. We moved Standard 6232 to Forest-wide direction. We added direction to Vegetation, Fire, and Transportation System Planning for clarification and consistency.

MP 8.0 - In response to comments, we made a number of minor editorial, consistency, or clarification changes to all sections of this MP. We rearranged MPs 8.1 through 8.6 so they are now in sequence. We added an 8.0 guideline to clarify Vegetation management related to NNIS, insects, and pathogens. We added a map for MP 8.1 (NRA) and direction to clarify management intent within 8.1 SPNM areas. We changed the numbering for all 8.2 direction for consistency. We deleted Standards 8281, 8415, and 8452 as they were not needed. We added direction for the 8.5 Pike Knob candidate RNA. We added the Loop Road Research Area in with the 8.5 Fernow Experimental Forest.

INTRODUCTION

To provide more effective and efficient management, the Forest has been divided into smaller units called Management Prescriptions (MPs), each of which is organized around a common management emphasis. The MPs are shown on the map for Alternative 2M in the map packet that accompanies the 2006 Plan and FEIS. This section describes each of these areas in detail, highlights resource areas of importance within each area, and prescribes specific management direction to address items that were not covered, or covered more generally, in the Forest-wide direction. The MPs for the 2006 Forest Plan are:

- MP 3.0 – Vegetation Diversity
- MP 4.1 – Spruce and Spruce-Hardwood Ecosystem Management
- MP 5.0 – Designated Wilderness
- MP 5.1 – Recommended Wilderness
- MP 6.1 – Wildlife Habitat Emphasis
- MP 6.2 – Backcountry Recreation
- MP 8.0 – Special Areas

This introduction is a user's guide for the MP area descriptions and direction that follow. The MPs describe management emphasis, current resource conditions, desired conditions, goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines for resource programs within each area. Program areas are organized similar to Forest-wide direction, by Forest Service Manual/Handbook number. Each MP area is divided into the four separate but connected subsections described below.

Management Emphasis

This is a brief statement describing what resources, settings, or activities that the MP is designed to emphasize. The management emphasis is typically expressed in bullet statements, with the level of importance or priority generally flowing from top to bottom.

Area Description

The area description summarizes the current conditions for important features and resources within each area. The purpose of this description is to familiarize the reader with the area and its characteristics and concerns. This information also helps set the stage for management direction that follows. Information in the area description typically includes:

- Overall size of the area and percentage of the Forest
- Current vegetation conditions by forest type and successional stage
- Fire regime and Condition Class data
- Miles of roads and trails, and average open road densities
- Recreational settings and opportunities
- Past or ongoing timber, range, and mineral activities or operations
- Electronic or communication facilities
- Impaired water bodies and eligible Wild and Scenic River segments

Desired Conditions

Desired conditions describe how the Forest would like to see the area look and function over time. They represent the desired result of following the management emphasis and direction for each area. They are written in the present tense to give the reader a better idea of what the areas should look like and provide once the desired conditions are achieved.

Management Direction

MP direction is designed to tier to Forest-wide direction, and to meet Forest-wide goals and desired conditions. MP direction, though, is generally intended to be more specific than Forest-wide direction, addressing specific elements or concerns related to each program area. In some cases, a program area may not have any additional direction at the MP level beyond that already provided at the Forest-wide level.

MPs use the same types of direction—goals, objectives, standards, and guidelines—that are defined in the Introduction to Chapter 2. Time frames for achieving MP objectives are essentially the same as for Forest-wide objectives—10 to 15 years (the planning period) unless otherwise stated. More specific time frames are not typically used because accomplishment can be delayed by funding, litigation, environmental changes, and other influences beyond the Forest's control.

Standards and guidelines appear in MPs to provide more explicit protection or guidance than can be provided through Forest-wide direction. This more explicit direction is based on the site-specific needs or concerns of the area. Put another way, Forest-wide standards and guidelines generally apply to all MPs on the Forest; however, this direction may be refined or expanded at the MP level to address specific concerns unique or specific to that MP.

Management Prescription Area Boundaries

Where developmental features—such as roads, pipelines, or transmission lines—are used as the boundaries for MP areas, these features are not considered to be within the areas, nor are they subject to the management direction associated with the MP areas. These features are managed under Forest-wide direction for Roads and Facilities, or Special Uses.

Emphasis Versus Actual Management

Management Prescriptions (MPs) were assigned to National Forest System lands based roughly on descriptions that the Forest Service has developed at the national level. The MPs represent management emphasis themes, ranging from areas with little or no development, such as Designated Wilderness (5.0) or Recommended Wilderness (5.1), to areas where a relatively high degree of development may be expected over time, such as Age Class Diversity (3.0).

It is important to note, however, that not every acre of every prescription area may reflect the MP emphasis. For instance, some prescription areas are intersected by administrative boundaries that have specific management requirements that may or may not match the overall MP. Eligible

Wild and Scenic River corridors are examples of these administrative areas. These areas would be managed according to their classification standards, as described in the Wild and Scenic River Act, regardless of what MP that surrounds them.

Riparian areas within channel or wetland buffers would also receive special management consideration, regardless of the surrounding MP. These considerations are described in the Forest-wide management direction of the 2006 Forest Plan.

Additionally, there are many smaller administrative units, with or without official designation, which may have management requirements that are somewhat different than the overall management emphasis of the MP. Examples of these units include developed administrative sites, recreation sites, designated utility corridors or communication sites, mines, and cultural or historical sites.

For instance, a campground would be managed as a campground, regardless of the MP in which it is located. Mineral development opportunities are determined to a large extent by mining legislation and deed terms. However, the amount or timing of operations for federally leased minerals could be influenced by specific MP management direction.

Special uses are authorized by permit, and thus MPs would not have much effect on existing uses. However, MPs could influence whether certain permits in some areas are renewed, or influence the likelihood of allowing certain types of new special uses in those areas.

Most cultural and historic sites are protected, particularly if they are eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. MP assignments would not affect these sites, but they could affect the settings around, or access to, these sites.

Individual MPs are presented below.

Management Prescription 5.0 – Designated Wilderness

Management Emphasis

This prescription emphasizes management of Congressionally designated wilderness to:

- Preserve wilderness attributes and the natural environment for future generations.
- Provide for challenging recreation opportunities in a wilderness setting.

Area Description

The following five areas are assigned to this prescription:

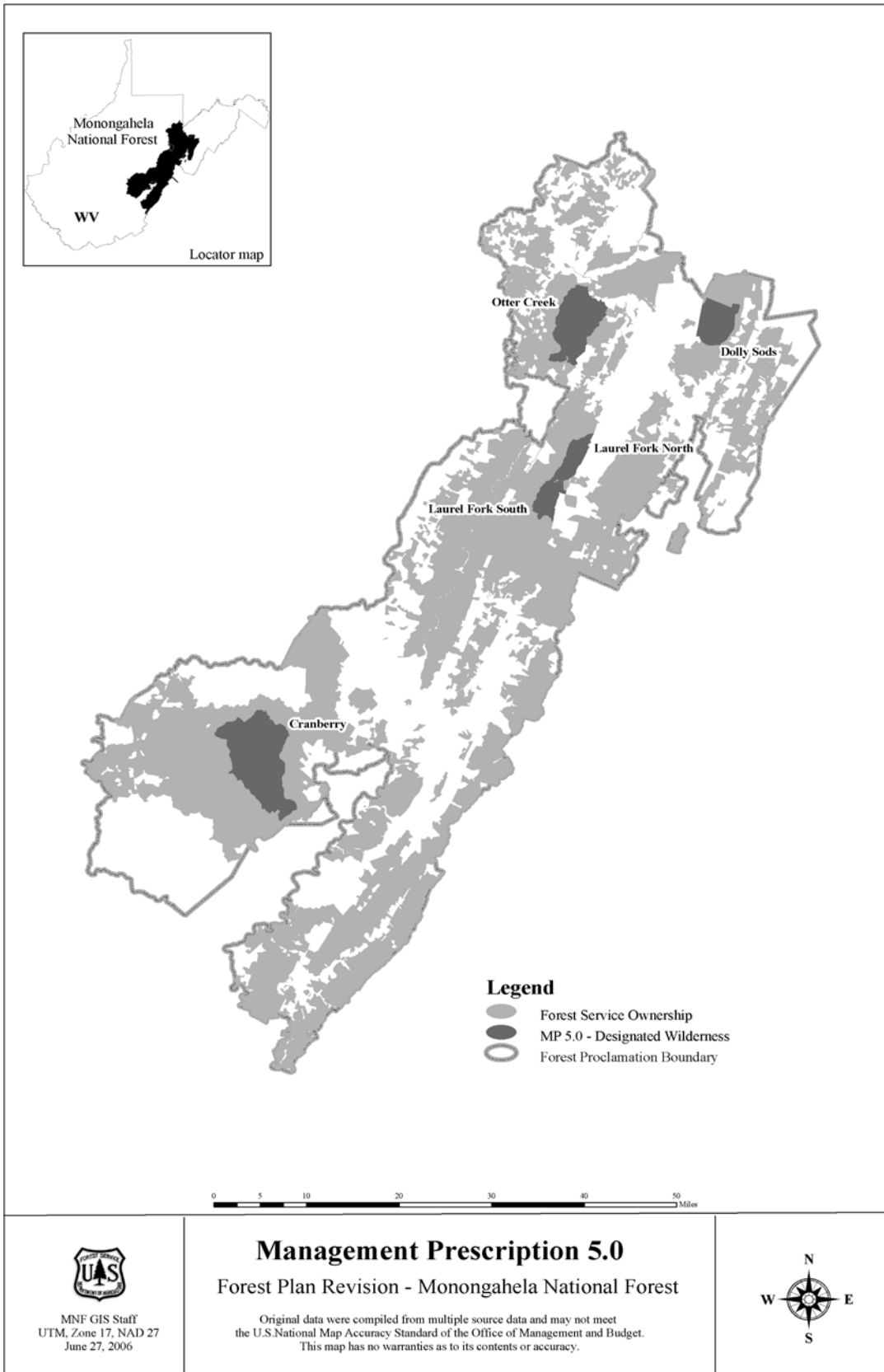
Designated Wilderness	Acres
Cranberry Wilderness	35,864
Dolly Sods Wilderness	10,215
Laurel Fork North Wilderness	6,055
Laurel Fork South Wilderness	5,997
Otter Creek Wilderness	20,000
Total Acres	78,131

The 78,131 acres represent the official acreage of the Wildernesses; however the acreage for the Management Prescription is closer to 78,700. This discrepancy is due to the fact that today's GIS technology measures areas differently than technology used 20 years ago, and that there are about 550 acres in the Dolly Sods Wilderness that were not accounted for as Wilderness in 1986.

Lands assigned to this prescription comprise an estimated 8.6 percent of the Forest (see 5.0 map). Elevations range from 2,300 to 4,500 feet, and these areas occur on a variety of land and soil types. The major forest communities and their current age classes are depicted in the table below.

Current Vegetation Conditions in Management Prescription 5.0						
Forest Community	Percent of Community in Rx Area	Percent by Age Class for Each Community				
		Early Successional (0-19 years)	Early-Mid Successional (20-39 years)	Mid Successional (40-79 years)	Mid-Late Successional (80-120 years)	Late Successional (>120 years)
Conifer	7.3	0	0.7	40.6	54.7	4.0
Northern Hardwoods	52.2	0	0.3	40.9	52.6	6.2
Mixed Cove Hardwoods	37.6	0	4.7	10.2	84.5	0.5
Mixed Oak	0.4	0	0	0	100.0	0
Pine-Oak	0.2	0	0	38.8	61.2	0

Because these prescription areas have a diversity of landforms and vegetation types, they provide a variety of habitat for wildlife, fish, and plant species. For these same reasons, a variety of rare flora and fauna, including threatened and endangered species, and non-native invasive species are also found within this prescription.



These areas are primarily forested with access provided by trail. They offer a natural setting that provides opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized recreation where natural ecological processes occur.

Although there are remnants of old roads and railroad beds in parts of the prescription areas, all roads have been abandoned and allowed to return to natural vegetation. No timber harvest activity has occurred within these prescription areas since well before their designation.

None of the prescription area is in Fire Regime 1, Condition Class 3, and only 5,500 acres (7%) are in Fire Regime III, Condition Class 2.

There are an estimated 148 miles of trail in these areas. All of the areas are managed for a Semi-Primitive Non-motorized ROS setting. Non-motorized recreation is currently featured, including hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. The areas are considered to have high scenic integrity.

There are no gas wells or pipelines, utility corridors, communication sites, electronic sites, or range allotments located in the area. An estimated 4% of the prescription area has privately owned mineral rights.

There are an estimated 23 miles of currently listed 303(d) impaired streams within the area, including all or portions of Dry Fork, Left Fork North Fork of Cranberry River, North Fork Cranberry River, Middle Fork Williams River, Red Creek, and Tumbling Rock Run.

Portions of four eligible Wild and Scenic River segments, totaling 33.8 miles, occur within or adjacent to this area. River miles, classification, and values are described in the table below. Rivers are currently managed according to Wild and Scenic River Act guidance for their classification and to maintain their outstandingly remarkable values and free-flowing status.

Eligible Wild and Scenic River Segments in MP 5.0			
River Name	Classification	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Miles
Otter Creek	Scenic	Scenery, Recreation	10.7
Laurel Fork	Scenic	Recreation	16.5
Red Creek	Scenic	Scenery, Recreation	5.3
Dry Fork	Recreational	Recreation	1.5

Desired Conditions

Visitors can find outstanding opportunities for unconfined recreation, including exploration, solitude, risk, and challenge. The area is primarily affected by the forces of nature, with human imprint substantially unnoticeable. Native terrestrial and aquatic communities are emphasized.

The area provides a diversity of habitats for wildlife species, as well as abundant remote habitat for species that are sensitive to disturbance. Management activities are typically extremely low to non-existent. Age class distribution is moving toward dominance by late successional stands where gaps form from natural disturbances as trees age.

There are no system roads open to the public, and motorized use and mechanized transport do not occur. Facilities, if they occur, are minimal and of a primitive nature. Any special uses are compatible with the wilderness setting.

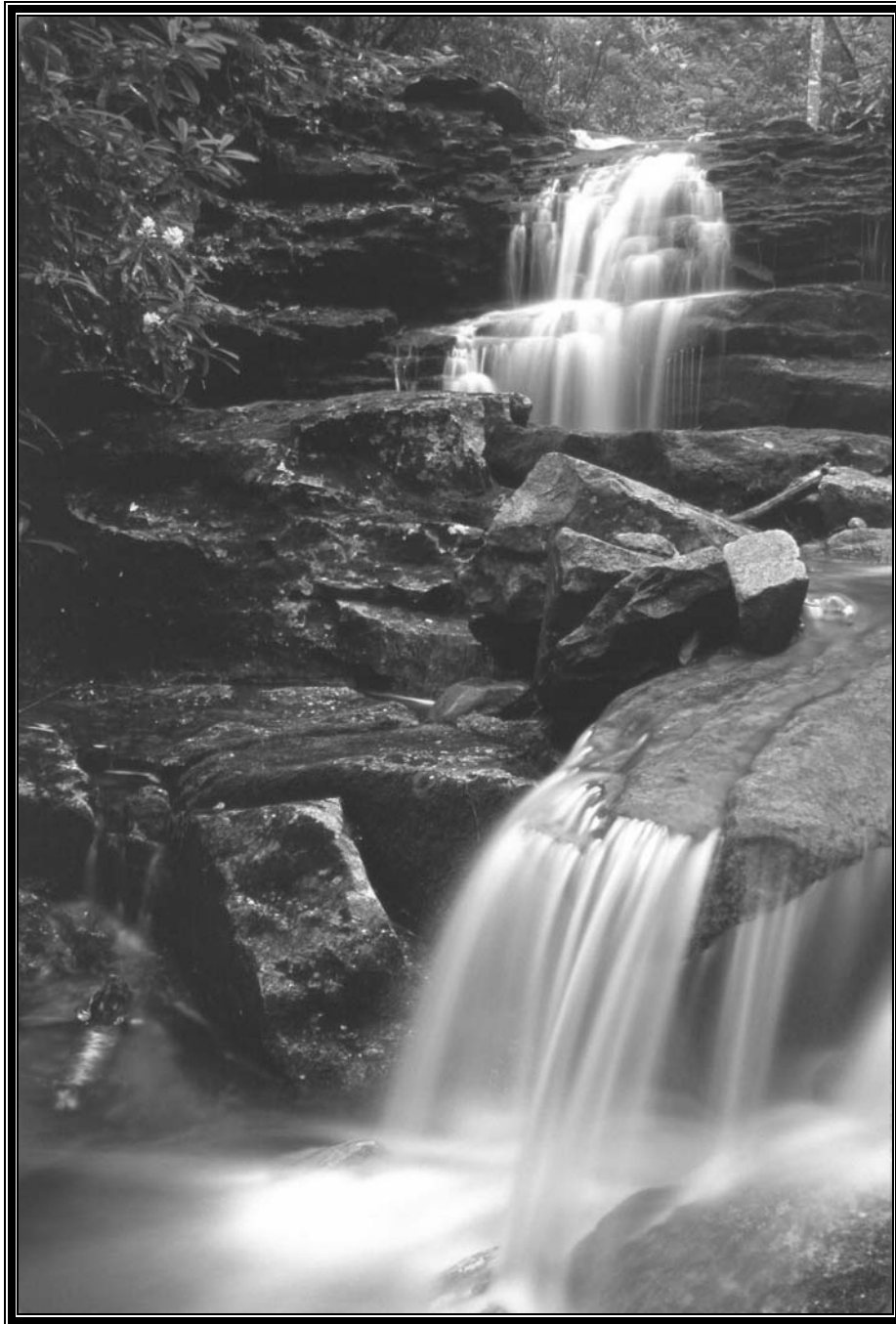
The areas provide abundant opportunities for challenging non-motorized recreation, including hiking, horseback riding, photography, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. All of the area is managed for a Semi-Primitive Non-motorized ROS setting. Very High scenic integrity is maintained throughout the areas.

Management Direction for 5.0 – Designated Wilderness		
Type	Number	Direction Description
1530 - Interdepartmental State, County, and Local Agencies		
Guideline	5001	Coordinate with the Federal Aviation Administration and the military to prevent undesirable aircraft noise resulting from low altitude commercial and military flights across designated wilderness.
1590 – Search and Rescue		
Standard	5002	Motorized use and mechanized transport may be used for life-threatening situations in search and rescue operations, with Forest Supervisor approval. In situations that are not life-threatening, the Forest Supervisor may authorize motorized use or mechanized transport on a case-by-case basis if circumstances warrant; for example, to remove a deceased person from the area.
1900 - Vegetation		
Goal	5003	Ecological processes dominate vegetation change on the landscape.
Standard	5004	Commercial timber harvest is not allowed. Vegetation management shall not be used to create vistas or alter the natural environment. Vegetation may be treated to rehabilitate trails or recreation use sites. Revegetation activities must use native vegetation.
Standard	5005	Vegetation management is allowed as a component of actions needed to protect wilderness attributes and adjacent lands from non-native invasive species, pests, pathogens, or fire.
1920 – Planning		
Objective	5006	Develop Wilderness Implementation Schedules to guide routine activities and implement the Forest Plan.
2200 – Range		
Standard	5007	Livestock grazing is not permitted in the current Wilderness Areas on the Forest.
2350 – Recreation: General Forest Areas		
Goal	5008	Recreation uses are consistent with preservation of wilderness attributes.
Standard	5009	The maximum party size allowed is 10.
Standard	5010	Registration permits for recreation use shall not be required unless: a) Required by Regional or National Policy, or b) Needed to protect wilderness attributes by controlling levels of use, or c) Needed to collect fees.
Standard	5011	Wood fires for cooking or warming may be allowed unless prohibited to protect resource values. Only dead and down wood may be used for fuel wood. Camp stoves are highly recommended for cooking.
Standard	5012	Facilities shall not be provided for the comfort or convenience of users. Facility design must be consistent with the desired SPNM setting. Facilities such as fireplaces, wilderness pit toilets, and gravel surfaces may be provided where necessary for resource protection.

Management Direction for 5.0 – Designated Wilderness		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Guideline	5013	Trail construction should be of a more primitive standard than elsewhere on the Forest, so as to provide a more challenging recreation experience for the visitor. This challenge should be tempered, however, with adequate resource protection and reasonable precautions for visitor safety. For example, trail bridges are normally regarded as a convenience and not provided, but may be provided for safety or resource protection reasons.
Guideline	5014	Trails are maintained primarily for resource protection. A range of trail maintenance levels can occur, depending on the amount of trail use and needed resource protection measures. Hand tools are normally used, but motorized use or mechanized transport may be authorized in an emergency situation that threatens the health and safety of visitors. The Forest Supervisor is authorized to allow this use.
Guideline	5015	Appropriate uses may include, but are not limited to: hiking, backpacking, camping, nature study and research, mountain climbing, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, and cross-country skiing.
2360 - Special Interest Areas		
Standard	5016	Cultural resources may be evaluated as needed, and may be stabilized and preserved if historically significant.
Standard	5017	On-site cultural resources interpretation shall not occur.
2380 – Scenery Management		
Standard	5018	Management activities shall meet the scenery integrity level of very high.
Guideline	5019	Structures and remnants of facilities—such as old railroad ties, culverts, or bridges—may be present. Those causing unacceptable adverse impacts on visitor’s experience of the wilderness should be removed. No intensive project to remove all such features is needed, but they should be phased out as the opportunity presents itself. Removal is regarded as a suitable project for volunteer groups.
2430 - Other Than Commercial Sales		
Standard	5020	Gathering firewood for home or commercial use is prohibited.
Standard	5021	The collection of forest products is prohibited except where authorized for scientific or research purposes.
2500 – Water and Soil		
Standard	5022	Activities to rehabilitate human-caused erosion and siltation are allowed but must be consistent with the ROS setting and SMS integrity level.
Standard	5023	Materials for erosion and siltation control shall be from on-site sources and be designed to blend in with the surrounding environment. Log structures shall be one log high. No concrete or gabions are allowed.
Guideline	5024	Trail construction should be located and designed to minimize soil disturbance.
Guideline	5025	Water quality should be maintained by ecological processes except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Where influenced by water treatment facilities located outside Wilderness boundaries; b) To correct problems caused by people, or; c) To correct problems caused by natural events that threaten downstream health or safety.
2630 - Fish Habitat		
Standard	5026	Activities to improve fish habitat are allowed but must be consistent with Wilderness attributes.
Standard	5027	Materials for fish habitat improvement shall be from on-site sources and be designed to blend in with the surrounding environment. Log structures shall be no more than one log high. No concrete or gabions are allowed.
Standard	5028	Fish stocking within the Wilderness must be by non-mechanical means only.

Management Direction for 5.0 – Designated Wilderness		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Standard	5029	No new recreational fishing impoundments are allowed.
Standard	5030	Limestone rotary drums are not allowed.
2700 – Special Uses		
Standard	5031	Corridors for reservoirs, water conservation works, power projects, transmission lines, and other facilities are not permitted, except as authorized by the act establishing the Wilderness, or as authorized by the President according to the Wilderness Act of 1964.
Standard	5032	Permits for storage of personal property, equipment, or supplies shall not be granted.
Guideline	5033	Non-recreation special use permits should not detract from the wilderness attributes of the area.
Guideline	5034	Recreation special use permits, including outfitter guide operations, should provide SPNM opportunities or at least be consistent with the wilderness attributes of the area.
2800 – Minerals		
Standard	5035	Federal minerals are withdrawn from leasing pursuant to the Wilderness Act of 1964.
Guideline	5036	Coordinate private mineral operations and mitigation measures to the extent allowed by deed and law to minimize adverse effects on wilderness attributes.
3400 – Integrated Pest Management		
Guideline	5037	Insect and disease control is allowed in Wilderness to protect Wilderness attributes and adjacent land values and landowner safety. Integrated Pest Management methods shall be used to minimize or prevent the development of pest or pathogen problems. Where problems are unavoidable, select a solution that provides the most beneficial method based on its ability to preserve wilderness attributes, effectiveness, safety, and environmental protection.
Standard	5038	Regional Forester approval must be obtained for pesticide applications in Wilderness.
4000 – Research		
Guideline	5039	Cooperate with research intended to develop basic knowledge on ecological processes, human behavior, or Wilderness management problems.
5100 – Fire		
Standard	5040	Wildfires shall typically be suppressed.
Standard	5041	Chainsaws, portable pumps, or retardant drops from aircraft in fire suppression shall not be used unless approved by the Forest Supervisor. On-the-ground applications of fire retardant chemicals may be approved by the Forest Supervisor.
Standard	5042	The Forest Supervisor must approve the use of tractors, tractor/plows, tracked or wheeled motorized equipment for emergency use within Wilderness.
5300 – Law Enforcement		
Standard	5043	Law enforcement shall be used for the prevention or correction of non-conforming uses.
5400 – Land Ownership		
Standard	5044	Recommendations for the use of condemnation shall be limited to: a) rights-of-way, and b) to acquire surface and subsurface values where conflicting uses of other ownerships preclude maintenance of Wilderness attributes, except where otherwise provided for by Law.
Standard	5045	Lands allotted to this prescription shall not be candidates for exchange.
6700 – Public Safety		
Goal	5046	Inform visitors to Dolly Sods of the presence of old ordnance remaining from military exercises during World War II. Alert the proper authority to remove ammunition discovered by visitors.
7160 – Signs		
Standard	5047	Trail signs may be provided within wilderness areas, provided:

Management Direction for 5.0 – Designated Wilderness		
Type	Number	Direction Description
		a) The amount of signs and trail blazing is kept to the minimum needed for resource protection. b) The sign standard is a routed wooden sign allowed to weather naturally.
7300 – Buildings and Structures		
Standard	5048	No buildings or structures shall be constructed, except as authorized by the act establishing the Wilderness.
7420 – Water Supply		
Standard	5049	Drinking water sources shall not be developed.
7450 – Air Quality		
Goal	5050	Work with Federal and State air quality management agencies to maintain or improve Air Quality Related Values (AQRVs) in Class I air quality areas, which currently include the Otter Creek and Dolly Sods Wildernesses.
Objective	5051	Identify the AQRVs for each Class I air quality area on the Forest. Define the limits of acceptable change (LAC) appropriate for each AQRV that would help maintain or improve protect Wilderness AQRVs.
Objective	5052	Participate in regional planning organizations (such as VISTAS) that are examining ways to reduce impacts to visibility and other AQRVs in Class I areas of the region.
Objective	5053	Review all Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) permits that might affect AQRVs in Class I areas, using screening procedures specific to the Otter Creek and Dolly Sods Wildernesses, current federal land manager AQRV analysis guidance, and current EPA-approved dispersion models.
7710 - Transportation System Planning		
Standard	5054	No roads shall be constructed or maintained except as authorized by the act establishing a particular area, or as required by outstanding or reserved rights.
Standard	5055	Roads that are constructed to respond to statute or outstanding/reserved rights shall be built to the minimum standard needed to protect resources and provide for user safety, and shall be decommissioned and rehabilitated at the end of operations or need.
Standard	5056	Motorized vehicles, motorized equipment, motorboats and other forms of motorized use or mechanical transport are not allowed except as authorized by the act establishing a particular area, or as required by outstanding or reserved rights.



Waterfall – Dolly Sods Wilderness

Management Prescription 6.2 – Backcountry Recreation

Management Emphasis

This prescription emphasizes the following:

- A semi-primitive, non-motorized setting with opportunity for a variety of dispersed recreation activities.
- A largely natural environment, with a general lack of management-related disturbance.
- Restoration and maintenance of ecological communities and habitats, predominantly through natural processes.
- Wildlife habitat for species that benefit from a general lack of human disturbance.
- Protection of watersheds and soils.

Area Description

The following areas are assigned to this prescription:

MP 6.2 Area	Acres	MP 6.2 Area	Acres
Big Draft	5,395	Middle Mountain	12,197
Canaan Loop	7,850	Roaring Plains East	2,962
Dolly Sods North	7,215	Roaring Plains North	3,119
East Fork Greenbrier	10,153	Seneca Creek	13,001
Gaudineer	6,727	Spice Run	6,171
Gauley Mountain East	7,780	Tea Creek Mountain	8,272
Gauley Mountain West	6,624	Turkey Mountain	6,111
Lower Laurel Fork	3,177	Total Acres	106,754

Lands assigned to this prescription comprise a total of 106,800 acres in 15 separate areas, or 11.6% of the entire Forest (see MP 6.2 map). Elevations range from under 2,000 feet to over 4,700 feet, and these areas occur on a wide variety of land and soil types. The major forest communities and their current age classes are depicted in the table below. Openings presently account for about 5 to 6 percent of vegetation conditions.

The area is characterized by a predominantly natural-appearing environment where there is a moderate to high probability of solitude. Recreation opportunities generally require a high degree of self-reliance, and pose a moderate to high degree of risk. Although there may be some evidence of other land uses, there is a high probability of experiencing isolation from the sounds and sights of man. Few roads exist and little motorized use occurs. Structures are rare, but may include rustic shelters, bridges and signs, and primitive sanitary facilities.

Because this prescription covers such a large expanse of land and diversity of landforms and vegetation types, virtually every species of wildlife, fish, and plants on the Forest is represented within it. For these same reasons, a wide variety of rare flora and fauna, and non-native invasive species are also found within this prescription.

Current Vegetation Conditions in Management Prescription 6.2						
Forest Community	Percent of Community in Rx Area	Percent by Age Class for Each Community				
		Early Successional (0-19 years)	Early-Mid Successional (20-39 years)	Mid Successional (40-79 years)	Mid-Late Successional (80-120 years)	Late Successional (>120 years)
Conifer	7.7	1.3	0.0	58.8	36.2	3.7
Northern Hardwoods	23.5	0.5	1.7	46.6	49.5	1.7
Mixed Cove Hardwoods	39.7	0.3	0.7	60.7	37.8	0.5
Mixed Oak	18.1	1.4	1.6	27.1	62.6	7.3
Pine-Oak	4.9	3.1	4.5	48.3	42.2	1.9

An estimated 11,000 acres (10%) of the prescription area are considered to be in Fire Regime 1, Condition Class 3, and 15,500 acres (15%) in Fire Regime III, Condition Class 2. These areas represent the best opportunity to use prescribed fire to reduce fuels and restore natural habitat structure and stand density, species composition, and disturbance regimes.

There are no Forest System Level 3, 4, and 5 roads in this prescription area, although Level 1 and 2 roads do exist in many areas (see Appendix C to the EIS for detailed descriptions). Public motorized use is prohibited, although some authorized and administrative use occurs. Some old roads have been converted to trails or linear wildlife openings. No timber harvest activity has occurred in most of the prescription area since 1986.

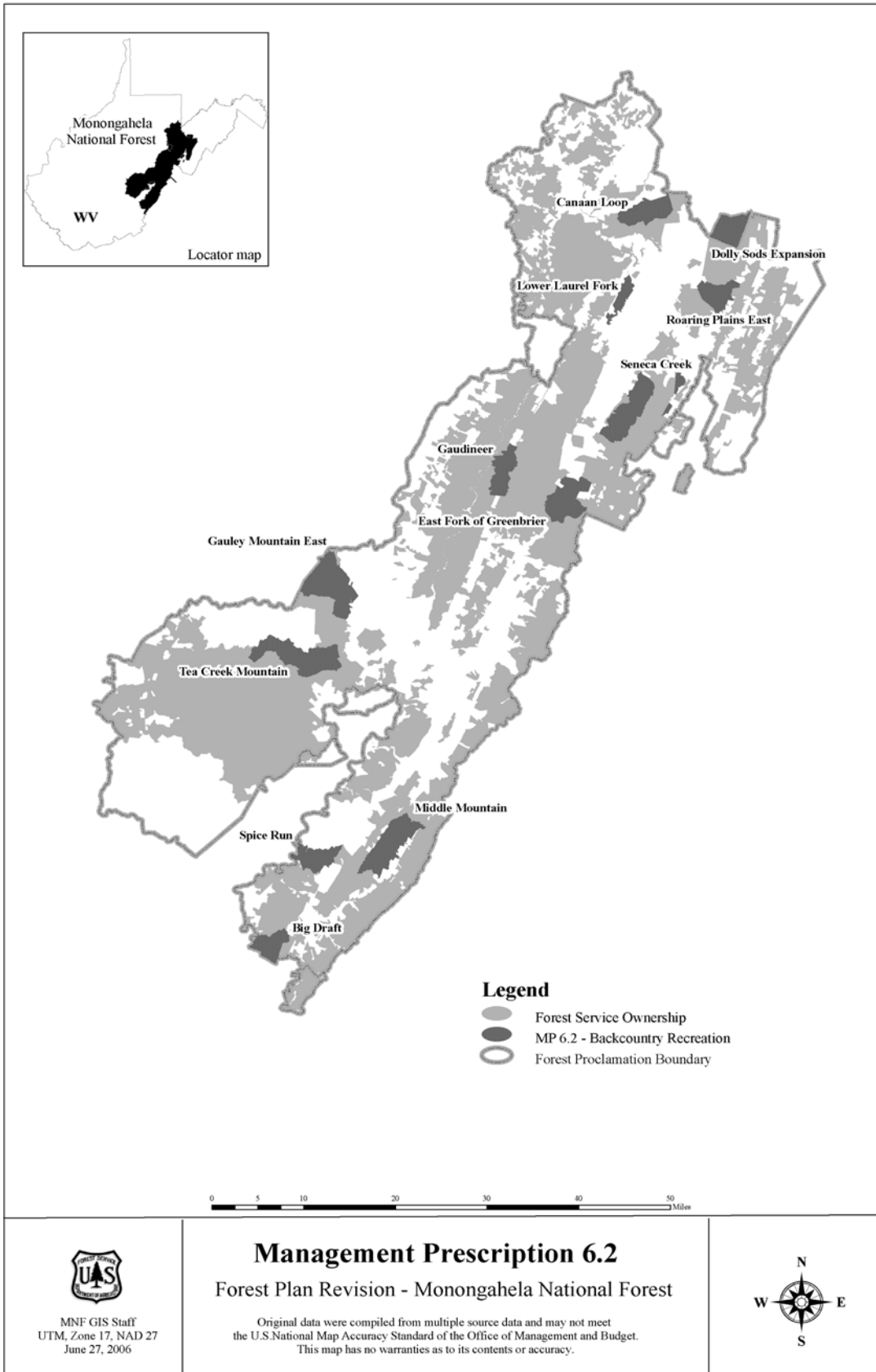
There are an estimated 160 miles of trail in this prescription area. Non-motorized recreation is currently featured, including hiking, mountain biking, hunting, horseback riding, fishing, and wildlife viewing. A number of visually sensitive viewpoints and travel ways occur within or adjacent to the prescription areas.

An estimated 50% of the total prescription area has privately owned mineral rights. There are no gas wells and no gas pipeline, although pipeline serves as the boundary for a couple of areas. There are no other utility corridors in this prescription area, and no communication or electronic sites, or range allotments.

There are an estimated 29 miles of currently listed 303(d) impaired streams within the area, including all or portions of Greenbrier River, Laurel Run, Red Creek, South Fork Red Creek, Sugar Creek, Tea Creek, and Williams River.

Portions of three eligible Wild and Scenic River segments, totaling 15.9 miles, occur within this prescription area. River miles, classification, and values are described in the table below. Rivers are currently managed according to Wild and Scenic River Act guidance for their classification and to maintain their outstandingly remarkable values and free-flowing status.

Eligible Wild and Scenic River Segments in MP 6.2			
River Name	Classification	Outstandingly Remarkable Values	Miles
Williams River	Recreational	Scenery, Recreation	5.9
Red Creek	Scenic	Scenery, Recreation	3.4
Laurel Fork	Wild	Scenery, Recreation	6.6



Desired Conditions

The areas are managed to meet the physical, managerial, and social settings consistent with the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum descriptions for semi-primitive non-motorized recreation. They provide a wide variety of dispersed recreation opportunities and settings. Natural processes are the primary agents for vegetative change, with vegetation management used only to protect the resource or complement the recreational value. Recreation facilities—including bridges, signs, fire rings, shelters, and sanitation structures—are relatively uncommon and rustic in appearance.

The transportation system is closed to public motorized use. Non-motorized recreation opportunities are featured.

Trails and closed roads provide abundant opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized recreation, including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing, although some restrictions may occur in order to achieve management prescription objectives. The area is managed for a SPNM ROS setting. High scenic integrity is maintained along visually sensitive viewpoints and travel ways.

In order to reflect the SPNM emphasis of this prescription, the type, amount, and intensity of management activities are limited in these areas. Restrictions on vegetation management, motorized access, and other activities are described in the management direction below.

Management Direction for 6.2 – Backcountry Recreation		
Type	Number	Direction Description
1590 – Search and Rescue		
Standard	6201	Motorized and mechanized equipment may be used for search and rescue operations.
1900 – Vegetation		
Standard	6202	No programmed commercial timber harvest shall occur. However, vegetation may be treated for the following reasons: a) To enhance dispersed recreation opportunities or settings b) To maintain or enhance public safety consistent with the degree of risk posed by SPNM areas c) To help control insect or disease outbreaks d) To salvage or restore areas extensively damaged by natural phenomena such as insects, disease, wind or ice/snow storms, and fire e) To meet the emphasis of the management area.
Standard	6203	No timber stand improvement is allowed.
Standard	6204	Vegetation management is allowed to rehabilitate and maintain trails or recreation use sites. Chainsaws and brush-clearing power tools are allowed. Revegetation activities must use native vegetation.
Standard	6205	Planting native species for the enhancement of visual quality or recreational settings is allowed.
Guideline	6206	Vegetation management may occur as a component of actions needed to protect adjacent lands from fire, non-native invasive species, pest, or pathogen damage.
Guideline	6207	Openings should constitute a minor component of the landscape, but may be maintained or developed to enhance visual and recreational settings.

Management Direction for 6.2 – Backcountry Recreation		
Type	Number	Direction Description
2200 – Range		
Goal	6208	Design and implement forage management practices to be consistent with the desired SPNM recreation settings and opportunities.
Guideline	6209	Range improvements may occur on existing allotments to provide a viable grazing opportunity and to maintain the visual and recreation benefits of the openings.
Guideline	6210	Encroaching woody vegetation and non-native invasive herbaceous species may be controlled as specified in the appropriate NEPA document.
2310 – Recreation System Planning		
Standard	6211	Recreation planning shall be consistent with the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) settings and opportunities for semi-primitive non-motorized (SPNM).
2350 – Recreation: General Forest Areas		
Goal	6212	Provide facilities and trails that are consistent with SPNM opportunities and settings.
Guideline	6213	Recreation facilities should be relatively uncommon, and they should be designed to blend in with the natural environment.
Guideline	6214	Trail densities should not exceed 4 miles per square mile to help maintain semi-primitive opportunities. Mechanized trail construction equipment may be used.
Guideline	6215	Trails should be constructed to Trail Class I, II or III standards. Trail bridges may be used to protect resources and to provide for visitor safety consistent with the degree of risk posed by these areas. Bridge construction and design should be consistent with the SPNM setting.
Guideline	6216	Trails should be maintained to Trail Class I, II or III standards. Power and mechanical tools may be used for trail maintenance.
Guideline	6217	Appropriate uses for SPNM opportunities and settings may include, but are not limited to: hiking, backpacking, camping, nature study, bicycling, mountain climbing, horseback riding, fishing, hunting, and cross-country skiing.
2360 - Special Interest Areas		
Guideline	6218	Interpretation of remote cultural and natural resources may be allowed and should be consistent with SPNM recreation emphasis.
2380 – Scenery Management		
Standard	6219	SPNM recreation areas shall be managed consistent with the Scenery Management System Integrity Objective of High. Deviations to the Moderate Scenic Integrity Objective are allowed to maintain recreation values, provide for public safety, or to restore ecological communities or natural habitat structure.
2500 – Water and Soil		
Guideline	6220	Watershed improvement or restoration may occur to reduce soil erosion and/or to improve surface and ground water quality. Watershed improvement projects should be designed to blend in with the natural environment and the SPNM setting.
2600 – Wildlife Management		
Goal	6221	Provide habitat for native or desired non-native species of game and non-game wildlife. Manage existing openings and grasslands to enhance backcountry recreational opportunities, including wildlife viewing and hunting.
Standard	6222	New wildlife habitat improvements are only allowed if they: a) Are compatible with the SPNM recreation setting, b) Can be built and maintained without additional system roads, and c) Use native vegetation as prescribed in FW Guideline VE05.
Guideline	6223	Maintenance of existing wildlife habitat improvements may continue.
2630 - Fish Habitat		
Standard	6224	Fish management practices—such as fish stocking, stream liming, and stream habitat improvement or protection—are subject to the following constraints designed to help

Management Direction for 6.2 – Backcountry Recreation		
Type	Number	Direction Description
		practices meet the desired SPNM setting of the area. a) Trucks and other heavy equipment are allowed only in areas accessible by existing roads that are designed to accommodate this type of vehicle traffic. b) Stream structures shall be constructed from logs and rocks to blend in with the natural setting. c) Log structures shall generally be small, usually not more than 2 or 3 logs high.
Standard	6225	Structure materials shall be from an on-site or a natural-appearing source. Concrete and gabions are not allowed. Quarried rock may be allowed on a case-by-case basis.
Standard	6226	Addition of limestone fines to improve water quality and fish habitat shall only be allowed where existing roads provide access, or through delivery by other feasible means consistent with SPNM setting.
Guideline	6227	Streamside shade planting may be allowed to maintain or enhance stream temperature or to provide habitat cover.
2700 – Special Uses		
Standard	6228	Discretionary special uses shall generally not be permitted unless they are compatible with the emphasis of the area.
Guideline	6229	Non-recreation special use permits should not detract from the area’s desired ROS setting.
Guideline	6230	Recreation special use permits, including outfitter guide operations, should provide SPNM opportunities or at least be consistent with the desired ROS setting.
2800 – Minerals		
Standard	6231	Federal oil, gas, and coal leases may only be issued if subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.
Guideline	6232	Extra restrictions, such as timing of operations, may be necessary in this prescription to minimize impacts inconsistent with the SPNM setting and to limit disturbance to wildlife.
5100 – Fire		
Standard	6233	Wildfires shall typically be suppressed.
Guideline	6234	Motorized and mechanized equipment and vehicles may be used for suppression activities, although hand tools and low impact techniques are preferred.
Guideline	6235	Prescribed fire may be used to help restore or maintain fire-dependent ecosystems, wildlife openings, or range allotments.
7100 - Transportation System Planning		
Goal	6236	Reduce existing roads through any one or combination of the following strategies: a) Decommission roads where they are no longer needed for management/access, b) Restore roads to productivity where needed, c) Convert roads to trails and/or linear wildlife openings, or d) Allow roads to return to productivity and natural appearance on their own.
Standard	6237	No new roads shall be constructed except to respond to statute, or to provide access for outstanding or reserved rights, or existing permits, leases, or contracts.
Standard	6238	Roads that are constructed for exceptions listed in Standard 6237 shall be built to the minimum standard needed to protect resources and provide for user safety, and shall be decommissioned and rehabilitated at the end of operations or need.
Standard	6239	Existing roads shall be closed to public motorized use. Infrequent administrative use and use by contractors and cooperators is allowed to the extent needed to accomplish management objectives. Motorized use by permittees and lessees is allowed to the extent needed to accomplish the purpose of the permit or lease.
Guideline	6240	Existing authorized roads may be maintained or reconstructed to provide for necessary administrative and authorized access.

Management Prescription 8.0 – Special Areas

Management Emphasis

This prescription emphasizes:

- The preservation of unique ecosystems or areas for scientific or recreational purposes.
- Areas to conduct research.
- The protection of special areas of national significance.

The MP 8.0 Special Areas on the Forest have been categorized into similar groupings and are shown in the table below.

Number	Name of Area	District	Acres
8.1	Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area	Cheat-Potomac	57,200
8.2	Big Run Bog National Natural Landmark (NNL)	Cheat-Potomac	660
8.2	Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock NNL	Cheat-Potomac	60
8.2, 8.4	Blister Run Swamp NNL and Botanical Area	Greenbrier	260
8.2, 8.4	Cranberry Glades NNL and Botanical Area	Gauley	780
8.2, 8.4	Fisher Spring Run Bog NNL and Botanical Area*	Cheat-Potomac	410
8.2, 8.3	Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area and NNL	Gauley	150
8.2, 8.3	Gaudineer Scenic Area and NNL	Greenbrier	140
8.3	Dolly Sods Scenic Area	Cheat-Potomac	2,180
8.4	Bear Rocks Bog Botanical Area*	Cheat-Potomac	10
8.4	Bickle Slope Botanical Area	Cheat-Potomac	10
8.4	Big Draft Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	70
8.4	Black Mountain Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	10
8.4	Fanny Bennett Hemlock Grove	Cheat-Potomac	70
8.4	Glade Run Swamp Botanical Area	Greenbrier	60
8.4	Meadow Creek Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	20
8.4	Mt. Porte Crayon Botanical Area	Cheat-Potomac	390
8.4	North Fork Mountain Red Pine Botanical Area **	Cheat-Potomac	10
8.4	Rohrbaugh Plains Bog Botanical Area	Cheat-Potomac	140
8.4	Max Rothkugel Plantation	Greenbrier	150
8.4	Stuart Knob Botanical Area	Cheat-Potomac	350
8.4	Virgin White Pine Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	10
8.4	Whites Draft Botanical Area	Marlinton-WSS	70
8.4	Blue Rock Geological Area***	Cheat-Potomac	260
8.5	Pike Knob Candidate Research Natural Area (RNA)	Cheat-Potomac	1,950
8.5	Black Cherry Candidate RNA	Greenbrier	120
8.5	Red Spruce Candidate RNA	Greenbrier	60
8.5	Yellow Poplar Candidate RNA	Gauley	110
8.5	Fernow Experimental Forest (Research Area)	Cheat-Potomac	4,550
8.5	Loop Road Research Area	Greenbrier	800
8.6	Spruce Mountain Grouse Management Area	Cheat-Potomac	1,750
8.6	Brushy Mountain Grouse Management Area	Marlinton-WSS	6,830
		Total Acres	79,360

*Within Dolly Sods Scenic Area

**Within Pike Knob Candidate NRA

***Within the NRA

Area Descriptions

The areas included in this prescription are scattered throughout the Forest and are of varying sizes (see MP 8.0 map). Their special characteristics are recognized by various administrative designations. Some areas have more than one special designation, such as the Cranberry Glades Botanical Area, which is also a National Natural Landmark and a candidate Research Natural Area. These designations have been separated into the following categories:

8.1 – Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area

This 99,900 acre NRA is divided into two units. The Spruce Knob unit comprises 27,000 acres, including 5,800 acres of private and 21,200 acres of NFS lands, and the Seneca Rocks unit, which is 72,800 acres in size, including 36,900 acres of private and 36,000 of NFS lands. The public lands are managed to provide a variety of recreation opportunities and settings. Recreation opportunities range from a high degree of development (Seneca Rocks Discovery Center and Seneca Shadows Campground) to very low development in backcountry areas, such as North Fork Mountain.

8.2 – National Natural Landmarks

The Park Service, Department of Interior, administers the Natural Landmarks Program. The objective of the program is to assist in the preservation of a variety of significant ecological and geological natural areas which, when considered together, will illustrate the diversity of the country's natural heritage. The seven current National Natural Landmarks on the Forest are: Blister Run Swamp Botanical Area, Cranberry Glades Botanical Area, Fisher Spring Run Bog Botanical Area, Falls of Hills Creek Scenic Area, Gaudineer Scenic Area, Big Run Bog, and Shavers Mountain Spruce-Hemlock area. Together they comprise an estimated 2,460 acres.

8.3 – Scenic Areas

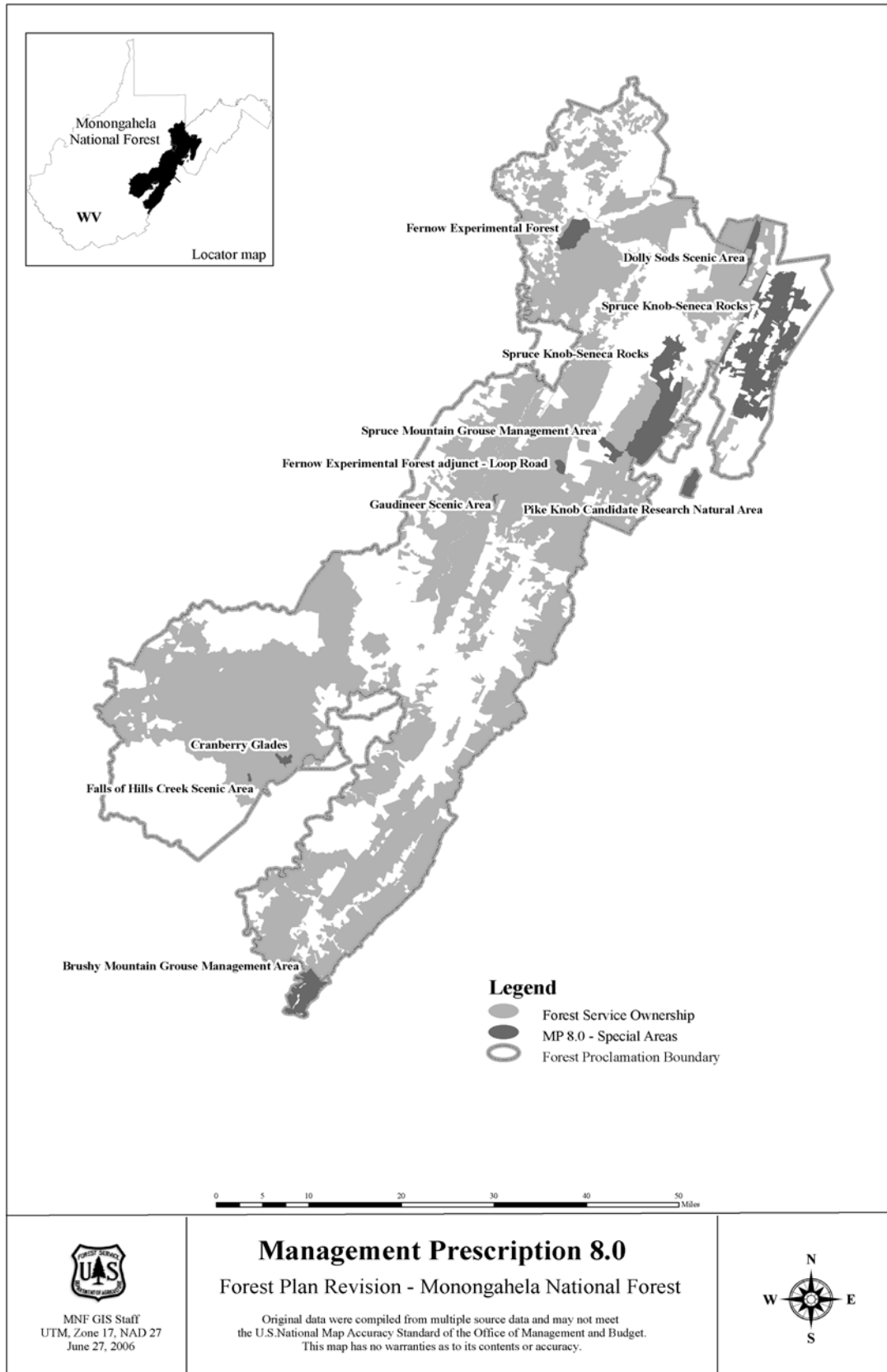
Scenic areas are places of outstanding beauty that require special management to preserve visual quality. There are currently three scenic areas on the Forest: Dolly Sods, Falls of Hills Creek, and Gaudineer. Together they comprise an estimated 2,470 acres.

8.4 – Ecological Areas

Ecological areas have been established to preserve rare ecosystems or areas to enhance biological diversity and provide for scientific or recreational activities. There are currently 17 Botanical Areas and one Geological Area on the Forest, comprising an estimated total of 3,080 acres.

Botanical Areas. Botanical areas contain specimens or groups of plants in plant communities that are significant because of the form, color, occurrence, habitat, location, life history, arrangement, ecology, environment, or variety.

Geological Area. The Blue Rock Geological Area is the only designated area on the Forest. This area is of special interest due to its high scenic quality, rare plant species, and cliff and talus habitats.



8.5 – Research Areas

These are areas on the Forest set aside for research purposes. They include the candidate Research Natural Areas (RNAs) and the Fernow Experimental Forest. RNAs represent distinct combinations of subsection and natural community alliances. All of the recommended or candidate RNAs on the Forest have establishment reports, but none have been designated as RNAs. Additional documentation through the NEPA process is needed to support designation of RNAs. The candidate RNAs comprise a total of 2,240 acres.

The Fernow Experimental Forest, an estimated 4,600 acres, is managed to conduct research activities. The Fernow was formally mandated in 1934 to be made “permanently available for forest research and the demonstration of its results”.

8.6 – Grouse Management Areas

There are currently two Grouse Management Areas on the Forest, one southwest of Spruce Knob Lake, and one in the southeast corner of the Forest. They are managed to create and maintain habitat suitable for ruffed grouse. These areas are considered to be in the suited timber base, and together they comprise an estimated 8,570 acres.

Desired Conditions

Special Areas retain the values and qualities for which they were originally designated. Areas contribute to the diversity of the Forest by preserving rare species, communities, habitats, and features. These areas also provide opportunities for scientific research and public enjoyment.

Management Direction

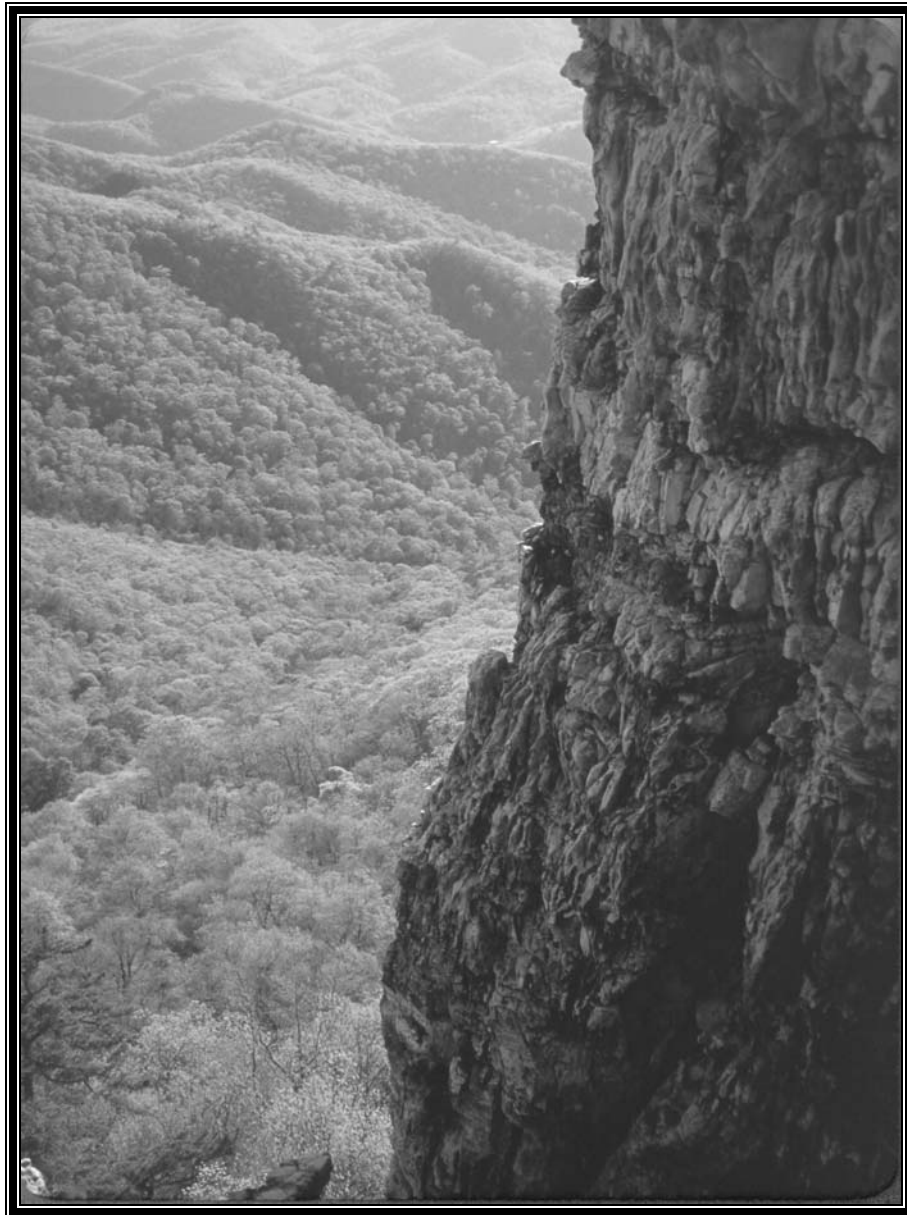
Management direction for special areas includes Forest-wide Management Direction, the General Management Direction in the table below, and the area-specific direction that follows this table.

General Management Direction for MP 8.0 - Special Areas		
Type	Number	Direction Description
1900 - Vegetation		
Standard	8001	The purpose of any vegetation treatment must be to protect or enhance the special values of these sites or contribute to research programs. Any silvicultural practice may be used for these purposes.
Guideline	8002	The frequency of entry to a stand and the proportion of an area operated at one time should be based on the management emphasis and objectives of the specific area.
Guideline	8003	Age and size class desired conditions should be defined by the Vegetation Management Plan for the area, if applicable.
Guideline	8004	Vegetation management may occur as a component of actions needed to protect special areas and adjacent lands from fire, non-native invasive species, pest, or pathogen damage.
2200 – Range		
Standard	8005	Forage management shall not adversely affect the overall values and qualities for which the special area was established.
2310 – Recreation System Planning		
Guideline	8006	ROS classes should be consistent with the management emphasis and direction of each

General Management Direction for MP 8.0 - Special Areas		
Type	Number	Direction Description
		special area.
2350 – Recreation: General Forest Areas		
Guideline	8007	Trails should be consistent with the special area management emphasis and direction.
2360 - Special Interest Areas		
Guideline	8008	Cultural resources interpretation should be consistent with the management emphasis and direction of each special area.
2380 – Scenery Management		
Guideline	8009	Scenic Integrity Objectives should be consistent with the management emphasis and direction of each special area.
2500 – Water and Soil		
Goal	8010	Maintain acidic conditions where they are essential to the ecosystem.
Standard	8011	Activities to rehabilitate human-caused erosion and sedimentation are allowed.
Standard	8012	Materials for erosion and sedimentation control shall be from on-site sources and be designed to blend in with the surrounding environment.
2600 – Wildlife Management		
Guideline	8013	Wildlife habitat management should be consistent with the management emphasis and direction of each special area.
2630 - Fish Habitat		
Standard	8014	Activities to improve fish habitat are allowed.
Standard	8015	Materials for fish habitat improvements shall be from on-site sources and be designed to blend in with the surrounding environment. Log structures shall be one log high. No concrete or gabions are allowed.
Standard	8016	No new recreational fishing impoundments are allowed.
Standard	8017	Limestone Rotary Drums are not allowed. Addition of limestone fines is allowed where consistent with the management emphasis of the area.
2700 – Special Uses		
Standard	8018	Special uses may be authorized as long as they do not adversely affect the overall values and qualities for which the special area was established.
2800 – Minerals		
Standard	8019	Surface-disturbing exploration (including core-drilling) and development are allowed as long as they do not adversely affect the overall values and qualities for which the special area was established.
5100 – Fire		
Guideline	8020	Prescribed fire may be used to establish, maintain, or restore vegetation.
5400 – Land Ownership		
Standard	8021	Lands in this prescription shall not be conveyed or exchanged unless: a) The transaction would be in the public's and agency's interest, and b) The land is not required to protect or maintain the values for which the area was created.
7100 - Transportation System Planning		
Goal	8022	Provide a transportation system that meets the needs of each special area on a case-by-case basis.
7730 – Transportation System Operation		
Guideline	8023	Roads may be closed to public use or restricted by vehicle type or season of use to mitigate impacts on values for which the special area was established.

Additional management direction for 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, and 8.6 areas is described below.

Because the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks NRA is managed under a separate law from the rest of the Forest, it has been given a separate Management Prescription section, complete with Management Emphasis, Area Description, Desired Conditions, and Management Direction.



From North Fork Mountain in the Spruce Knob – Seneca Rocks NRA

8.2, 8.3 – Gaudineer National Natural Landmark and Scenic Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8309	Maintain virgin forest characteristics.
Standard	8310	Recreation development is limited to interpretation of the area's special characteristics.
Standard	8311	Trail maintenance shall conform to the level of public access and use. Favor native materials. Hazard trees or branches adjacent to or leaning over the trail may be removed.
Standard	8312	Public motorized use on trails is prohibited.
Standard	8313	No new facilities shall be constructed. Maintenance of existing facilities is allowed.
Standard	8314	No timber products, including firewood, shall be removed from the area.
Standard	8315	No timber stand improvement, intermediate harvests, or reforestation are allowed.
Standard	8316	Use of limestone gravel on the loop trail is prohibited to minimize potential effects to the plant communities in the area.
Standard	8317	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.
Standard	8318	Insect and disease control is not allowed except to protect adjacent land values or control non-native invasive pests.
Standard	8319	No wildlife openings shall be created or maintained.
Guideline	8320	Visitors should be made aware of the inherent danger in the area during high winds.

8.3 – Dolly Sods Scenic Area		
Type	Number	Direction Description
Goal	8321	Maintain the natural appearance, and the scenic, recreational, and botanical qualities of the area.
Standard	8322	Livestock grazing may only be permitted if there is no conflict with the scenic and botanical qualities of the area.
Standard	8323	Structural and non-structural range improvements are prohibited.
Standard	8324	Camping is prohibited within 300 feet of Forest Road 75.
Standard	8325	No commercially owned facilities are allowed.
Standard	8326	Public motorized transport and equipment is restricted to Forest maintained roads.
Standard	8327	Open campfires are prohibited.
Standard	8328	Pack and saddle stock may only be used on trails and areas maintained for this use.
Standard	8329	Green commercial timber sales are prohibited.
Standard	8330	Timber cutting, pesticides, or prescribed fire are allowed if used to improve scenic or botanical qualities, or for safety reasons, salvage, or insect and disease control.
Standard	8331	Personal use firewood collecting is prohibited.
Standard	8332	Use of limestone gravel shall be limited or prohibited where it could adversely affect the natural pH level of bogs or other rare communities within the area.
Standard	8333	Federal oil and gas leases may be issued in the prescription area, but shall be subject to a stipulation that prohibits surface occupancy.
Standard	8334	No new wildlife openings, impoundments, or water holes shall be constructed.
Standard	8335	Commercial special uses that require the construction of permanent structures are not allowed.
Standard	8336	Existing roads within the area shall be maintained or improved, but no new roads shall be built for Forest management.