

# **Wilderness Workshop**

*National Park Service, National Wilderness Program*

**Missoula, Montana**

*January 9-10, 2002*

**Wednesday, January 9, 2002**

**3-5 pm**

Attendees: Kelly Hartsell, Troy Hall, Denis Davis, Alan Watson, Peter Landres, Connie Myers, Chris Barns, Brad Johnson, Dave Morris, Steve Henry, Don Neubacher, Steve Ulvi, Kathy Tonnesen, Troy Hall, Lisa Gerloff and Ann Mayo Kiely (Dave Parsons and Rick Potts sat in for a limited time).

Facilitator: Troy Hall/Kathy Tonnesen

Workshop Coordinator/Recorder: Lisa Gerloff/Brad Johnson  
(see attached list of participants for affiliations)

**Introductions:**

Introductions were made by Troy Hall and Kathy Tonnesen. Troy Hall introduced herself as someone who had facilitated wilderness discussions for other groups. She would be directing the workshop. Kathy Tonnesen provided some background on the Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit, the university/agency partnership that organized this workshop. Each participant discussed their involvement in wilderness issues and what they could bring to the workshop.

The group was joined by Dick Ring and Wes Henry via telephone conference. The charge to the workshop participants was given by Dick Ring.

**Objective:**

The objective of the workshop is to determine if a wilderness performance goal can be constructed for the National Park Service to guide management of national park units with wilderness resources. And if so can the group recommend a goal(s) for the National Park Service to be included in the Strategic Plan.

In working on this objective, Dick Ring asked that the workshop participants articulate the following:

1. What is the distinct difference in how NPS manages wilderness vs. other places in the park (with no development)?
2. What are the conditions that we are trying to achieve that represent wilderness (physical and experiential)?
3. What is the definition of success of wilderness management?
4. How do we measure if we have achieved the goal?

Connie Myers expressed concern over defining wilderness. Wilderness has been designated by Congress and the condition of wilderness varies from park to park. Chris Barns suggest that the difference or the distinction of wilderness may be managerial/social rather than physical condition. For example, no motorized vehicles are allowed in wilderness. Dick Ring reiterated that the goal and the performance measure must have language reflecting resource condition as well as user experience.

Wes Henry asked that the group read the notes we provided to workshop participants. This paper provided background and some information on a goal that Wes Henry and Dave Graber put together. Dick Ring and Wes Henry concluded their participation via teleconference.

One of the questions proposed was: Does the NPS need an Education goal? Kelly Hartsell presented information on how a Wilderness Education Goal has worked for Shenandoah National Park. The objective of the SHEN Wilderness Education program is to mitigate backcountry over-use. In this case education is used as a measurable tool. Since starting the Wilderness Education program, Shenandoah has used physical (soil erosion) and social indicators (encounters per mile) to measure how successful education has been in improving or sustaining the quality of their wilderness. An important element of the Wilderness Education program goals for Shenandoah is to provide an infrastructure and rationale for securing additional funding.

The group discussed how surveys could be used as a measurement tool. The question was proposed by Dave Morris, "Who do you survey for Wilderness?" Is it the wilderness user, the "windshield visitor" or the public at large? Another item to consider is the wilderness user does not make the distinction between NPS, FWS, BLM, and FS wilderness. What should be measured? Knowledge, practices, commitment, values... Although this question was not answered in the broad sense, it was concluded that a survey to measure the success of a wilderness GPRA goal needs to be practical and simple.

Steve Ulvi presented information on three possible wilderness performance goals: education, experience, and resource condition. Wilderness in NPS includes designated, proposed, and potential wilderness. Participants representing the Forest Service (Myers, Landres, and Watson) and Fish and Wildlife Service (Henry) shared the recent experiences of their agencies in considering their own goals for wilderness.

The day concluded with Troy Hall working with the group to develop an action for tomorrow's meeting. It was decided that time would be given to Rick Harris to cover the guidelines of NPS GPRA. Then the group would decide on  $\pm 3$  goals to work on, and would divide into subgroups (with a recorder in each group) to work on those goals, putting them in the suggested work sheet format.

**Thursday, January 10, 2002            8-4 pm**

Attendees: All of January 9<sup>th</sup> attendees plus Rick Harris, Gary Machlis, and Jennifer Hoger.

Rick Harris spoke to the group on the need of wilderness goal(s). The goal(s) that the group articulate today will be presented to the NPS on February 12-13. The intent is to get the wilderness goal(s) into the new NPS Strategic Plan, which will be completed by September 2002. Rick Harris stressed that the language used in writing the goal(s) must

be outcome based and must include the following elements: 1.) clearly defined measurement methods; 2.) who will do the measurements, and 3.) how much it will cost.

The group decided there were three goal areas for wilderness:

1. Education
2. Experience
3. Resource Condition

The group divided into the three subgroups to work on writing a goal for each topic.

Education Goal: Dave Morris, Don Neubacher, Rick Harris, Kelly Hartsell, Connie Myers, Jennifer Hoger, Brad Johnson and Steve Ulvi

Experience Goal: Troy Hall, Chris Barns, Gary Machlis, Denis Davis, and Ann Mayo Kiely

Resource Condition Goal: Peter Landres, Alan Watson, Kathy Tonnessen, Steve Henry and Steve Ulvi

The action plan was to end the day with having at least one goal completed and ready to submit as a performance goal for the Strategic Plan. The group came back together at noon to evaluate their progress and decide if the group as a whole should chose and work on one goal for the afternoon. After each goal area reported in, it was clear that each goal was close to being completed. In the afternoon the participants stayed in the three separate goal groups. By 4:00 pm a performance goal was completed for Education, Experience and Resource Condition. For a complete description of each goal, please see attachments.