

Sustainable Recreation Work Group Progress Report to the Legislature

December 2008



Vision

“The Sustainable Recreation Workgroup envisions a future in which lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) offer distinct and diverse outdoor recreation opportunities within the overall fabric of recreation in Washington, attracting visitors from local communities, the region, the country and the world. Solid partnerships and a strong stewardship ethic among user groups, recreationists, private landowners, and government agencies help enhance enjoyable and safe outdoor experiences for everyone. Outdoor recreation on DNR-managed lands relies on sustainable funding from a variety of sources, as well as sound management and strategic planning. The public knows it can count on a range of DNR-managed lands to provide recreation, public revenue, healthy ecosystems, economic opportunities, and enhanced quality of life for current and future generations...”

For complete text of Vision, Values and Context, see attached.

December 23, 2008

Dear Legislator:

One of the products of the 2008 legislative session was the passage of SHB 2472 creating the Sustainable Recreation Work Group. It is our pleasure to present this progress report on the activities of the work group as required by SHB 2472.

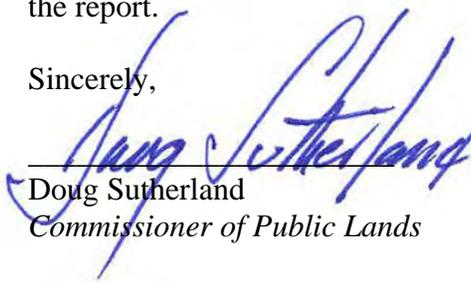
In the past few months, we have finalized membership of the work group, convened meetings of the group in Issaquah, Yakima, and Seattle, and toured the Ahtanum State Forest. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) also hosted nine public workshops around the state to hear from Washington citizens regarding where they recreate, what kinds of recreation activities they enjoy, and their vision for sustainable recreation. In addition, an online survey of the recreating public was used to gather even more information. The results from these meetings and the survey have been presented to the work group.

The work group has an ambitious work plan for the next year. However, the group members are very knowledgeable, energetic and committed to their mission of developing a long-term vision for safe, sustainable, and enjoyable outdoor recreation on DNR-managed lands. To date, the work group has met three times. And although members represent diverse interests, they've shown a genuine spirit of cooperation and willingness to consider new ways to improve recreation.

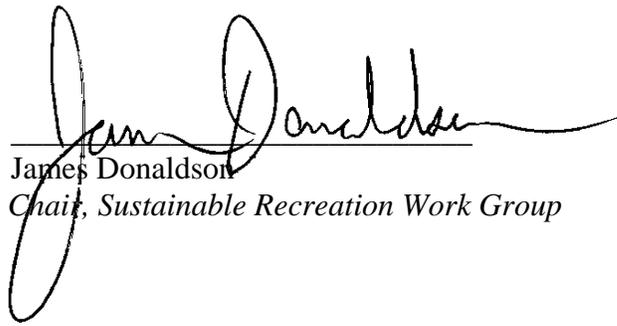
We look forward to providing you with the work group's final report of recommendations for sustainable recreation by December, 2009 as directed by SHB 2472.

Please do not hesitate to call us if you have questions or concerns about the report.

Sincerely,



Doug Sutherland
Commissioner of Public Lands



James Donaldson
Chair, Sustainable Recreation Work Group

Sustainable Recreation Work Group Progress Report to the Legislature

PREFACE

Recognizing the growth in population and the dramatic changes in the kinds of recreation and available opportunities in the past 40 years, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requested the 2008 Washington State Legislature to establish the Sustainable Recreation Work Group (work group). The legislature unanimously passed SHB 2472, which directs the work group to examine current laws and policies regarding recreation and make recommendations on policy changes and opportunities to develop sustainable funding sources.

WORK GROUP FORMATION

Public Lands Commissioner Doug Sutherland appointed James Donaldson, a former professional athlete and current community leader, to chair the work group. Following the appointment of Mr. Donaldson, DNR proceeded to fill the remaining positions on the work group, directed by SHB 2472 as consisting of not more than 28 members. Legislative representatives were also appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and a representative appointed by the Governor's office. (See attached list of work group members).

Formation of the work group brings together a balanced representation of leaders from various communities and recreational interests throughout the state with a common challenge: to improve recreation on state trust lands, aquatic lands, and other state-owned lands managed by DNR.



**Sustainable Recreation Work Group Members: Ahtanum State Forest
Tour October 2008**

To date, the work group has met three times. Through a strong spirit of cooperation, they have identified and ranked key policy issues to explore further as they develop their findings and recommendations. In addition, they've created a vision statement that will form the foundation of their work.



**Sustainable Recreation Work Group Members: Ahtanum State Forest
Tour October 2008**

DNR set up web pages devoted to providing more information about the work group, its activities, meeting dates, how the public can get involved etc., at:

www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/RecreationPlanning/Pages/amp_rec_sustainable_recreation.aspx

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

DNR sponsored a series of public workshops around the state in September 2008 to gather input from individuals and user groups regarding where they recreate and what kinds of recreational activities they enjoy. An online survey of the recreating public was conducted in September and October 2008 to gather even more input. DNR also asked the public for their vision for recreation on DNR-managed lands for the next 50 years. (See attached list of questions asked and a summary of vision comments.)

A total of 1,642 people responded to the online survey and more than 400 people attended the following workshops:

- September 9, 2008 – King County Library Service Center, Issaquah (Kick-off meeting)
- September 10, 2008 – Sun Valley Restaurant, Okanogan
- September 10, 2008 – Longhouse Educational and Cultural Center, The Evergreen State College, Olympia
- September 11, 2008 – Deer Park Library, Deer Park
- September 15, 2008 – Hoquiam Library, Hoquiam
- September 15, 2008 – Vancouver Water Resources Education Center, Vancouver
- September 16, 2008 – North Olympic Library-Port Angeles Branch, Port Angeles
- September 16, 2008 – Burlington Library, Burlington
- September 17, 2008 – Grupe Conference Center, Central Washington University, Ellensburg

Both the workshop and survey responses have been summarized and shared with the work group. These responses are available on DNR's website at:

www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/RecreationPlanning/Pages/amp_rec_sustainable_recreation_comments.aspx

WORK PLAN

DNR staff has worked closely with James Donaldson, work group Chair; Michael Kern, facilitator from Triangle Associates, Inc.; and work group members to develop an ambitious work plan. To reduce travel time and expense, we're exploring innovative alternatives to face-to-face meetings. In fact, a subcommittee of the work group and DNR staff successfully used GoToMeetings® to collaborate electronically on developing a draft vision statement. The use of technologies such as blogs, video conferencing, and phone-in public meetings are also being explored.

WORK GROUP TIMELINE

Vision Development and Issue Identification

- September 26, 2008 - First meeting: Issaquah
- October 29, 2008 - Second meeting: Yakima
- October 30, 2008 - Field visit: Ahtanum St. Forest
- November 14, 2008 - Third meeting: Seattle
- December 2008 - Progress report due to Legislature

Fact Finding and Issue Development

- January – April, 2009 - Work sessions via “go-to” meetings, video conferencing, etc.
- May, 2009 – Fourth meeting: TBD
- June – August, 2009- Work sessions via “go-to” meetings, video conferencing, etc.

Issue Deliberation and Recommendation Development

- September, 2009 – Fifth meeting: TBD
- October, 2009 – Sixth meeting: TBD
- October, 2009 – public meetings: TBD
- November, 2009 – Final meeting: TBD

Final Recommendations and Work Group Report

- December 2009- Final report to Legislature

CHARTER

The work group developed and adopted a charter (see attached) during the first and second meetings to guide their work. The charter discusses the background, purpose, function, legislative direction, membership, member commitments, DNR commitments and organization of meetings of the work group.

VISION

The work group has also developed and adopted a vision (see attached) for sustainable recreation on DNR-managed lands. This vision, which includes key values and a statement of context, will be the foundation that supports the work group's process in developing recommendations to the legislature.

POLICY ISSUES

During the second and third meetings, the work group discussed various policy issues regarding sustainable recreation on DNR managed lands. The group identified the following issues as the highest priority to address and develop recommendations for presentation to the legislature in the final report.

Issue	Priority score	Issue	Priority score
Funding	9	Illegal activities and enforcement	4
Resource / environmental protection (including wildfire)	9	Recreation integration into DNR strategic planning	4
Availability of lands, access, and information	7	Ownership patterns and consolidation of lands	3
Planning and coordination	6	Neighbor and right-of-way grantor issues	2
DNR's Distinctive role / appropriate types, levels of service, and locations / use of facilities	6	Safety and legal liability	2
Elevating awareness about DNR's distinct role	6	Opportunities for local collaboration and volunteer opportunities	2
Education	5	Consistency with trust land management	1

The work group will present their draft recommendations to public at two or more public meetings, tentatively planned for October 2009. The work group will review the public comments and use them to develop their final policy recommendations to the legislature.

PROVIDING BACKGROUND TO THE WORK GROUP

To get work group members up to speed on essential information to help them make sound recommendations, DNR and staff from other agencies prepared presentations and documents. These are posted on the Sustainable Recreation Work Group's web page at:

www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/RecreationPlanning/Pages/amp_rec_srwg_mtg_summaries_agendas.aspx

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sustainable Recreation Work Group has generally concurred that recreation on DNR-managed lands is not funded at an adequate nor sustainable level. At a minimum, current levels of funding should be maintained, and the work group anticipates providing additional funding recommendations in its final report due December 2009.

ATTACHMENTS

Participants	Attachment A
Questions Asked of the Public (Workshops and Online Survey)	Attachment B
Summary of Public Vision Comments	Attachment C
Charter	Attachment D
Vision	Attachment E

ATTACHMENT A

**SUSTAINABLE RECREATION WORK GROUP
PARTICIPANTS**

James Donaldson, Chair

Owner, Donaldson Fitness and Physical Therapy

Tom Allen

Paraglider

Greg Abrahamson, Chair

Spokane Tribe of Indians

Delia Alred, President

Washington State Snowmobile Association

Arlene Brooks, Washington Executive Director

Pacific Northwest Four Wheel Drive Association

Patti Case, Public / Regulatory Affairs Manager

Green Diamond Resource Company

Bill Chapman, President

Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust

Jeff Chapman, Director, Buckhorn Range Chapter

Back Country Horsemen of Washington, Inc.

Will Chin, Outreach and Events Administrator

REI, Inc.

Michelle Connor, Senior Vice President

Cascade Land conservancy

Kaleen Cottingham, Director

Recreation and Conservation Office

Rick Dahl, President

Washington Off Highway Vehicle Alliance

Lindell Haggin, Member

Spokane Audubon Society

Gerald Hodge

Washington Water Trails Association | Washington Boaters Alliance

Dale Hom, Forest Supervisor
US Forest Service, Olympic National Forest

Bill Koss, Manager, Planning and Research
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

John Lang, Executive Director
Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance

Dave Lipinski, Owner
Powersports Northwest

Elizabeth Lunney, Executive Director
Washington Trail Association

John Mankowski, Senior Policy Advisor
Governor's Office

West Mathison, President
Stemilt Growers, Inc.

Pedro Navarrete, Student Body President
Central Washington University

Tom Perry, President
Hunters Heritage Council

Jennifer Quan, Manager, Lands Division
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Mike Racine, President
Washington Scuba Alliance

LEGISLATORS:

Brian Blake, Washington State Representative
D-19th Legislative District

Ken Jacobsen, Washington State Senator
D-46th Legislative District

Judy Warnick, Washington State Representative
R-13th Legislative District

ATTACHMENT B

**QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE PUBLIC
(WORKSHOPS AND ONLINE SURVEY)**

- Where do you like to recreate?
- What kinds of recreation do you enjoy?
- How can the Department of Natural Resources improve your recreational experience on DNR-managed lands?
- What is your vision for recreation on DNR-managed lands?

For more details on public responses to these questions, visit:
www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/RecreationPlanning/Pages/amp_rec_sustainable_recreation_comments.aspx

ATTACHMENT C

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC VISION COMMENTS

The following is a summary of comments received during DNR's public workshop in September 2008 and from DNR's online survey conducted September through October 2008.

What is your vision for recreation on DNR-managed lands?

- Public lands available for public use for everyone.
- Sustainable recreation that is compatible with environmental protection, sustainable forestry, economic development for surrounding rural communities.
- Good roads! Basic facilities! Plenty of room in camping areas. Good signage. Up to date website information regarding any benefits offered to the public.
- Safe environment on lands managed for sustainable use.
- To have places I can take my family, friends and relatives to enjoy the great out doors.
- Greater access to rivers.
- Quiet activities separated from those that disturb the wildlife, good signs advising the public of what is appropriate and funding to police activities to prevent damaging activities.
- Seamless management with federal and other state and county providers of recreation opportunities.
- Recreation among a working forest that is fee based and legislatively funded that provides appropriate resource and user protection.
- A place where we can all share and enjoy the great outdoors in the Northwest. To respect and help care for the lands that have so generously been given to us for our recreational use. To create a community who helps care for this resource!
- Multi-disciplined recreation opportunities where preservation of the land and natural resources is a required recreational style and

educational opportunities are available to increase awareness. Personally, I want to have safe, multi-level (novice to expert) type trails, with safe access for vehicles/parking.

Being able to get away to hike or horseback ride close to home and enjoy quiet time in the woods or at the water.

- Overall, I would like to see long-term availability of rustic, less developed camping for kayakers/canoeists even if time/person limits, and/or scheduling were imposed for them.

I would want public lands to always belong to the public and to be nourished and protected so we can support natural resource jobs as well as the natural environment.

- More volunteer involvement in trail maintenance, designated off-road motorcycle areas.
- No fees to use land.
- Recognize the validity and the integrity of a substantial number of different interests in access to the public lands.
- More openness on the part of DNR management. such as this survey.
- To be able to continue to use the lands in harmony with other users.
- That in 20-30-or 100 years we can still drive "up the hill" and enjoy the outdoors and great campgrounds (primitive or not, real camping!) and easily accessible horse trails.
- Continued use for generations to come.
- Access to more trails, linkage of existing trail systems to be able to extend the existing semi-urban system.
- I would like the DNR to look at recreation as an asset (possibly a revenue-generating asset) they can benefit from, just like the timber and water that flows through these lands.
- Encouraging education so that horses, hikers and bikers can peacefully co-exist.

- Keep people connected to nature.
- Easy public access to marine areas and tidelands.
- I envision communing with nature while utilizing DNR-managed lands. I envision hikes with quiet trails and plenty of wildlife. I envision bringing my dogs. I envision riding my horses. I envision utilizing DNR land as if it were untouched land waiting to be explored and enjoyed.
- Accessible land, without a bunch of regulations.
- A focus on outdoor recreation with published maps listing state lands and uses.
- A wonderland of shared use trails that exists in perpetuity.
- Shifting focus away from revenue focused or sustainable yield focused forestry towards a recreation-infrastructure focus designed to enhance the value and livability of local communities for the long term. Logging and other extractive uses have their place, but they should be managed in a way that expands the long term 'stock' of recreational opportunities.
- Make Washington State a destination for outdoor recreational activities.

ATTACHMENT D



Sustainable Recreation Work Group CHARTER | November 2008

Background

Recognizing the growth in population and the dramatic changes in recreational activities and opportunities in the past 40 years, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requested the 2008 Washington State Legislature to establish the Sustainable Recreation Work Group (Work Group). Legislature unanimously passed HB 2472, which directs the Work Group to examine current laws and policies regarding recreation and make recommendations on policy changes and opportunities to develop sustainable sources of funding.

Purpose

The Work Group will create a long-term vision for recreation opportunities on state lands managed by DNR, including state-owned aquatic lands and natural areas. The Work Group will also provide recommendations supporting that vision. The Work Group will be forward-thinking and creative in conducting discussions at a state-wide level, rather than focusing on site-specific landuse decisions.

Function

In developing a vision for recreation on DNR-managed lands, the Work Group will consider the following:

- The contribution of outdoor recreation to the quality of life in Washington.
- Current recreational uses and future trends.
- DNR's management authority and other legal obligations regarding outdoor recreation.
- The nature of the state lands that DNR manages.

The Work Group will review existing data and current laws, policies, and practices carried out by DNR and other land managers across the country. With this information, the Work Group will develop recommendations to support the vision and help DNR to manage these lands in a manner that supports recreation access while being consistent with its legal responsibilities.

Legislative Direction

HB 2472 specifically directs the Sustainable Recreation Work Group to assess how various kinds of recreation affect:

- The interests of those engaged in other, perhaps overlapping or competing, recreation uses.
- The interests of the trust beneficiaries.
- Private landowners, federal landowners, and state government due to increased wildfire risk.
- Local and state government liability for personal injury and property damage.
- Natural habitat, water quality, and air quality.
- The land uses and management plans of adjacent landowners.

In developing the vision and policy recommendations, the Work Group will consider the following:

- Environmental responsibility.
- Sustainable funding.
- Compatibility with trust land and state land management obligations.
- Rights of nearby and adjacent land owners.
- Relationship with statewide issues including Puget Sound Action Agenda, Biodiversity Council Strategy, the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, and the Invasive Species Council's Recommendations.

In addition, the Work Group must coordinate with the recreational advisory committees of other stakeholder groups appointed or established by the Commissioner of Public Lands. The Work Group will submit their findings to the legislature no later than December 1, 2009. An interim progress report to the legislature is due in December, 2008.

Membership

The Work Group will comprise no more than 28 various stakeholders and four state legislators. Following informal consultation with various interest groups, agencies and individuals, the Commissioner of Public Lands will appoint individuals to represent most or all of the following interests:

- Organized recreation groups
- Civic/business
- Trust beneficiary
- Forest landowner/industry/forest manager
- Environmental organizations
- State land lease holder
- Legislators
- Local government
- Tribal
- Representative of the Governor
- US Forest Service
- State agencies involved in recreation

Member Commitments

Members will place a high priority on preparing for, attending and actively participating in approximately six to eight Work Group meetings. Although members may represent a particular interest, they are expected to focus on the overall good of the state, not just the perspectives of a single interest area. Members will also work cooperatively and creatively and actively seek areas of agreement.

Members agree to operate under the following guidelines when communicating with other Work Group members, DNR, and external parties:

- Be mutually respectful.
- Be honest about one's own or group's core values, interests, and goals.
- Avoid attributing positions or motives to other parties in communicating externally.
- Communicate externally as a group as much as possible, for example through periodic agreed-on statements of progress.

Members will also inform others about the Work Group and seek input from a variety of perspectives on the issues and acknowledge that all interests bring with them legitimate purposes, goals, and concerns. Members will respect and adhere to these commitments agreed upon by the Work Group members at their first meeting.

To maintain continuity, Work Group members may use an alternate only after consultation with the Chair, DNR and/or the facilitator. The member and his or her alternate must keep each other informed and up to date, so each can participate fully and not hold the group up while trying to get up to speed. DNR may replace Work Group members if they are no longer able to participate.

DNR Commitments

DNR will support the Work Group, including preparation of schedules, reference materials, agendas, meeting summaries, and an initial list of issues for the Work Group's consideration. In addition, with advice of the Work Group, DNR will:

- Bring experts to provide information to the Work Group including reports of other outdoor recreation providers.
- Provide technical information and issue papers.
- Keep the Work Group informed about opportunities and constraints uniquely associated with various categories of state lands managed by DNR.
- Respond to Work Group requests for information.
- Assist the Work Group with public statements, public engagements and public review.

Organization – Meetings

With the assistance of a neutral facilitator, members will work to reach consensus on the recommendations the Work Group provides to DNR and the legislature.

The Commissioner of Public Lands will designate a chair to:

- Provide leadership for the Work Group.
- Work with the facilitator to develop meeting agendas.
- Ensure that meetings are productive and accomplish the purpose of the Work Group.
- Act as the primary spokesperson for the Work Group.

The Chair is empowered to designate members and ad hoc subgroups to perform assignments and address specific issues

Work Group members will provide input on the length and frequency of meetings, which should not exceed a total of 40 hours. Questions or issues for inclusion on an agenda should be submitted to DNR, the Chair or the facilitator.

Work Group meetings will be open to the public. Throughout the term of the Sustainable Recreation Work Group, DNR staff will share public comments they receive related to the Work Group's mission during meetings. Opportunities for formal public comment will be provided as part of the Work Group Meeting Agendas.

To reduce its carbon footprint, the Work Group will strive to make use of technologies such as electronic meetings, video and phone conferencing, "digital" handouts, etc.

ATTACHMENT E

SUSTAINABLE RECREATION WORKGROUP

VISION AND CONTEXT– NOVEMBER, 2008

Vision

The Sustainable Recreation Workgroup envisions a future in which lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) offer distinct and diverse outdoor recreation opportunities within the overall fabric of recreation in Washington, attracting visitors from local communities, the region, the country and the world. Solid partnerships and a strong stewardship ethic among user groups, recreationists, private landowners, and government agencies help enhance enjoyable and safe outdoor experiences for everyone. Outdoor recreation on DNR-managed lands relies on sustainable funding from a variety of sources, as well as sound management and strategic planning. The public knows it can count on a range of DNR-managed lands to provide recreation, public revenue, healthy ecosystems, economic opportunities, and enhanced quality of life for current and future generations.

This vision for outdoor recreation on DNR-managed lands embraces the following values:

- **ACCESS:** Outdoor enthusiasts with diverse interests enjoy a broad range of opportunities to responsibly and sustainably enjoy recreating on DNR-managed lands. Where appropriate, new, emerging, and yet-to-be-discovered recreational activities can flourish along with traditional uses which have been part of Washington’s cultural heritage.
- **PARTNERSHIPS:** Strong alliances exist among user groups, private landowners, and agencies. Cooperation, mutual respect, and coordination among these groups ensures enjoyable and satisfying outdoor experiences for Washingtonians and visitors.
- **STEWARDSHIP:** Recreationists, user groups, volunteers, and land and resource managers share and demonstrate an ethic of stewardship, sustainability, and conservation that protects and restores our environment and valuable resources, habitat, and ecosystem health, now and for the future.
- **SUSTAINABLE FUNDING:** The state and its citizens appreciate the variety of benefits provided by a healthy financial investment in outdoor recreation on DNR-managed lands and act to sustain and protect that

investment. Funding sources are creative, diverse and sustainable in the face of evolving needs. Funding decisions are fair, appropriate, transparent, and involve the public.

- **EDUCATION:** People who recreate on DNR-managed lands understand and practice good behavior, respect the differences and commonalities among the different types of uses, and recognize the need for shared resource stewardship. New users are encouraged and enabled to responsibly take advantage of available recreation opportunities. Recreation users on DNR-managed lands understand and respect the rights and varying objectives of public and private neighboring landowners.
- **SAFETY:** Everyone enjoys the outdoors responsibly, with minimal conflict and risks to person and property other than those inherent in outdoor recreation
- **MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING:** DNR integrates recreation into its overall strategic planning for its various land management programs on trust lands, aquatic lands, and natural areas. Recreation management uses measurable objectives and reasonably reflects changing trends, demographics, and varying resource needs.
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Outdoor recreation on DNR-managed lands enhances the vitality of local communities for the long term, helps make Washington state a destination for outdoor recreationists, and contributes to the region's ability to compete for new businesses and employees.

Context

Valuable and distinct recreation opportunities occur on a variety of types of state-owned land managed by DNR. On each type of land, recreation exists side-by-side with other primary purposes for these lands, including generating perpetual revenue for trust beneficiaries, providing water-dependent commerce and navigation, and protecting critical elements of Washington's natural heritage. On all these lands, issues of recreational access, vulnerable environmental features and habitats, limited facilities, neighbor concerns, safety, crowding, shrinking recreation funding, and incompatibility among some forms of recreation exist, along with the challenges of combining recreation with the lands' other legal purposes.

For almost 40 years, state law has directed a multiple-use approach to recreation on these lands. Most users and land managers know that all uses can't simultaneously occur everywhere. Yet most still value the concept of multiple use, along with shared stewardship and sustainability. DNR-managed working forests and leased trust lands, aquatic lands, and natural areas can continue to

provide distinct recreation opportunities, close to urban and rural communities, for diverse kinds of semi-primitive recreation not typically provided by others. These opportunities can be compatible with other land management obligations, but only if the ongoing and newly emerging issues and challenges are faced with vision, energy, and collaboration.

