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SYNTHESIS OF THE OSMP ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT

Revised 2/13/03

System-Wide Visitor Use Strategies

System-wide visitor use strategies have wide application across the OSMP system. They are employed in different ways in different places and situations, but they are the “bread and butter” tools to provide good passive recreation opportunities and visitor experience on OSMP lands. This suite of management strategies casts a “wide net” to deal with most issues related to visitor use. Area-specific and activity-specific strategies complement system-wide strategies and fill in the gaps of this wide net.

OSMP VISITOR SERVICE PROGRAMS	MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
Education and Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave-No-Trace: education on trail courtesy and ethics, communication to motivate staying-on-trail, trailhead / trail outreach contacts, public programs, written and electronic information • Provision of visitor information: visitor contacts at the Chautauqua Cottage and Flagstaff Summit Nature Center; informational signs; interpretive signs, brochures and website info • Guided public hikes and education programs • Presentations to community and user groups • Partnering with user groups to provide education, signs, facilities, signs, enforcement, monitoring • Enabling and managing volunteer activities
Enforcement of Regulations and Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ranger patrol and enforcement of regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safety regulations (e.g., no firearms / weapons, glass containers, fireworks, alcohol, fires outside designated grills, etc.) ○ Parking fee regulations ○ Resource protection regulations ○ Seasonal wildlife and livestock closures ○ Temporary safety and rehabilitation closures ○ Permanent public access restrictions ○ On-trail use regulations ○ Regulations for specific recreational activities (e.g., dog walking, climbing, fishing, hang gliding, etc.) • Emergency medical and rescue services
Permitting of Special Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group activities over a size threshold • Scientific research activities • Collecting activities
Permitting of Commercial Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification / permits for guides, instructors, and trainers • Permits for defined commercial uses
Visitor Facilities and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer maintenance and restoration projects • Reservations for facility rental • Construction and maintenance of visitor facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trails—new trails, connections, rebuilds, reroutes ○ Trailheads ○ Visitor parking ○ Scenic pull-outs ○ Toilet facilities

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OSMP VISITOR SERVICE PROGRAMS	MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trash containers and pick-up ○ Dog-poop bag stations ○ Picnic tables, grills, and shelters ○ Chautauqua Cottage ○ Flagstaff Nature Center ○ Erosion control and drainage facilities ○ Fences and gates ● Improvement of existing parking at and around trailheads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delineated parking spaces (with fencing, concrete blocks, etc.) ○ Retrofit to drive-through design ○ Dedicated horse trailer parking ○ Work with State Highway Department or Boulder County to sign parking / no parking on adjacent roadways
Land Acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Land acquisition to provide for recreational opportunities, including key trail connections ● Land acquisition to protect and restore natural and agricultural resources
Monitoring of Visitor Use and Resource Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitoring of visitor experience conditions to identify actions needed to maintain or enhance them ● Monitoring of resource conditions and the impacts of visitor use
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GIS analysis and mapping for visitor services ● Level of service standards for visitor facilities and services ● Coordinated planning, work programming, and budgeting for visitor facilities and services and protection of natural, cultural, and agricultural resources ● Best management practices for visitor facilities and maintenance

Area-Specific Visitor Use Strategies

Area-specific visitor use strategies address issues not adequately covered by system-wide strategies. Area-specific visitor use strategies are geared to the specific management needs and opportunities uniquely appropriate in designated visitor management areas. Management emphasis varies in these areas because of differences in the amount of visitor use, resource sensitivities, and management practicalities. The following is a summary of the major strategies employed in the three visitor management areas. For a more detailed description of these visitor management areas and associated strategies, see Appendix ___.

Recreation Activity Management Areas

Management emphasis: Given high levels of use and concentrated recreation activity within a natural setting, a wide range of passive recreational opportunities compatible with resource protection goals will be provided. The majority of visitor use on OSMP lands occurs in these areas, and providing a quality recreational experience is the major emphasis.

- Targeted education and enforcement to reduce visitor conflict and support quality visitor experience
- Enhanced level of visitor services and facilities to support relatively high levels of use and a quality visitor experience
- Use of durable materials in trails and facilities
- More intensive infrastructure to reduce visitor conflicts and resource impacts
- More tolerance for relatively low-impact undesignated trails

Special Protection Areas

Management Emphasis: Given high-value ecological resources, large blocks of effective wildlife habitat, and relatively low levels of use, resource protection is the highest priority. Maintaining low levels and impacts of use is the major emphasis.

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- Very low tolerance for resource degradation; implementation of proactive measures to protect resources
- Construction of trail and other facility improvements that enhance protection of resources
- On-trail use only and dogs on leash or no dogs
- Limited new trails
- Some permanent natural area closures
- High level of effort in the removal of undesignated trails

Recreation Monitoring Areas

Note: This visitor management area is likely to be revised. Discussions from the trail assessment/prioritization group and the monitoring group have identified the need to revise the concept and to address the “leftover” area that is not placed in one of the three types of areas.

Management emphasis: Given high-value ecological resources and moderate-to-high levels of dispersed recreational use, equal weight is given to provision of quality recreational opportunities and experience and resource protection. Preventing degradation in the quality of visitor experience and resource conditions is the major emphasis.

- Low tolerance for resource degradation
- Construction of trail and other facility improvements that enhance visitor experience and protection of resources
- Some permanent natural area closures
- Voluntary but encouraged on-trail use and dogs on leash
- Medium level of effort in the removal of undesignated trails
- High level of monitoring of resource / visitor conditions so that new impact mitigation measures will be triggered, if needed, to maintain acceptable visitor experience and resource conditions

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Activity-Specific Visitor Use Strategies

Activity-specific visitor use strategies will be employed only when unique management needs or circumstances dictate management approaches that are not covered by system-wide or area-specific management strategies. Due to the nature of the activity, the potential for unique visitor or resource impacts for some specific recreational activities is unique and requires unique management strategies.

Identification of Recreational Activities Prohibited or Allowed on OSMP Lands					
<p>Recreational Activities Prohibited on OSMP Lands:</p> <p>A limited number of recreational activities do not fit the criteria for passive recreation and therefore are not allowed on OSMP lands. These activities create a high level of impacts on visitors and natural resources. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motorized vehicles • Hunting • Competitive events • Organized sports • Paintball games • Geocaching • Orienteering • Swimming (prohibited in ponds, lakes, and reservoirs) • Camping (except at 4th-of-July campground) 	<p>Passive Recreational Activities Allowed <u>Only</u> in Specifically-Designated Areas or Sites:</p> <p>In order to provide high-quality recreation opportunities in locations that can handle the impacts, these activities will be allowed only in a limited number of appropriate sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing • Wading • Tubing, kayaking, canoeing • Sledding • Hang / paragliding • Model glider flying • Bolted climbing • Dog walking • Traditional climbing / bouldering 	<p>Passive Recreational Activities Allowed <u>Only</u> on Designated Trails:</p> <p>In order to provide high-quality recreation opportunities in locations that can handle the impacts, these activities will be allowed only on a limited number of appropriate trails. These activities include:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p>On Soft- or Hard-Surface Trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycling • Horseback riding • Horse-drawn wagons or sleds • Dog sleds • Wheeled-chair use • Strollers / joggers • Cross-country skiing • Snowshoeing </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p>On Hard-Surface Trails <u>Only</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-line skates • Wheeled boards (e.g., skateboards, mountain boards) </td> </tr> </table>	<p>On Soft- or Hard-Surface Trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycling • Horseback riding • Horse-drawn wagons or sleds • Dog sleds • Wheeled-chair use • Strollers / joggers • Cross-country skiing • Snowshoeing 	<p>On Hard-Surface Trails <u>Only</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-line skates • Wheeled boards (e.g., skateboards, mountain boards) 	<p>Passive Recreational Activities Allowed on OSMP Lands:</p> <p>The characteristics of these passive recreational activities make them generally compatible with OSMP visitor use and resource protection goals. The lower the impact, the greater degree of compatibility. In most cases, staying on trail is key to minimizing impact. These activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiking • Trail running / jogging • Nature study • Photography • Picnicking
<p>On Soft- or Hard-Surface Trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycling • Horseback riding • Horse-drawn wagons or sleds • Dog sleds • Wheeled-chair use • Strollers / joggers • Cross-country skiing • Snowshoeing 	<p>On Hard-Surface Trails <u>Only</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-line skates • Wheeled boards (e.g., skateboards, mountain boards) 				

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In some cases, specific activity-specific strategies are needed to provide a high quality of visitor experience and avoid or mitigate activity impacts. The following strategies are unique to the activity and are not adequately covered by system-wide or area-specific strategies.

PASSIVE RECREATION ACTIVITY	MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES UNIQUE TO THE ACTIVITY
Horseback Riding	<p><u>Designation of Trails</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate trails where horseback riding is allowed • On particularly crowded trails where conflicts cannot be adequately dealt with, prohibit horse use • Enforce new provisions on horseback riding exclusively on designated trails <p><u>Education and Outreach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate the public about pedestrian safety around horses and horseback riders on reducing user conflicts • Encourage equestrians to use and stay on trails that are sustainable for horses • Train equestrians as volunteers to enable them to do outreach in the field • Educate the equestrian community about non-native invasive weed problems and the need for using weed-free hay • Expand education and outreach activities to support commercial operators in their teaching about OSMP regulations and leave-no-trace ethics and techniques <p><u>Trail Improvements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and promote the use of existing trails that are suited for horseback riding use • Construct new multi-use trails that will accommodate horse travel sustainably, if practical • Incorporate trail designs that will accommodate horse travel sustainably, if practical, in projects involving trail repair, rebuilds, and reroutes • Upgrade parking facilities on a selective basis, in order to provide more appropriate and convenient parking for horse trailers. • Where appropriate, retrofit gates to increase their ease of use by horseback riders. <p><u>Enforcement and New Regulations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt new regulation that requires use of weed-free hay if feeding at the trailhead
Bicycling¹	<p><u>Education and Outreach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the International Mountain Biking Association’s Rules of the Trail as a bicyclist-specific extension of OSMP’s Leave No Trace program • Establish bicyclist peer patrols (i.e., cyclists educating other cyclists about the impacts of their activities) • Educate pedestrians / hikers about what to expect when sharing trails with cyclists <p><u>Enforcement and New Regulations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new regulations that define and prohibit excessive speed, endangerment, and reckless riding, in order to increase trail safety and courtesy • Institute a mandatory or requested “go slow” or walking zone for cyclists in areas where high speed is a significant factor in pedestrian-bicyclist conflicts <p><u>Trail improvements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the appropriateness of designating and constructing new multiple-use trails that include biking use, as new trails are being planned • Construct missing trail connections and roadway underpasses to provide longer and safer trail rides, where feasible and sustainable • Widen trails on open flat areas, where appropriate, or create parallel or double-track trails, which would allow additional space for all users and lessen possible conflicts • Investigate a sustainable trails connection from Eldorado Springs to Walker Ranch as an alternative to riding up Flagstaff Road, in collaboration with public agencies, private property owners, and bicycling user groups

¹These strategies are in addition to requiring use in designated areas, sites, or trails.

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PASSIVE RECREATION ACTIVITY	MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES UNIQUE TO THE ACTIVITY
<p>Climbing and Bouldering</p>	<p><u>Designation of Areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate areas where climbing and bouldering are allowed <p><u>Education and Outreach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue work with climbing organizations to develop an outreach program and a code of ethics for climbers and boulderers, in order to deal with the impacts of off-trail use, prevent damage to sensitive geological and plant resources, and minimize rockface or boulder cleaning / grooming. <p><u>Enforcement and New Regulations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify and strengthen regulations that prohibit chipping, gluing, or destruction of vegetation, geologic, or other resources • Require commercial use permits for all groups led by paid climbing guides and instructors, in order to bolster compliance with climbing regulations and good practice and to monitor the impacts of climbing • Require certification of all climbing guides and instructors, in order to ensure at least a minimum amount of knowledge and skill for guides to play the desired role as teacher and role model. <p><u>Trail and Infrastructure Improvements for Climbers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a sustainable climbing / bouldering access trail system, with the collaboration of climbing organizations such as the Flatirons Climbing Council, The Access Fund, & the Colorado Mountain Club, & other members of the public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On an area-by-area basis, 1) assess existing conditions; 2) designate climbing areas with sustainable infrastructure; 3) and identify areas where: a) sustainable trail improvements would enhance climbing experience or correct significant deficiencies; identify areas where b) on-trail use requirements would make climbing compatible with protection of sensitive resources; and c) climbing is not appropriate because of the high cost of making access sustainable or overriding resource conservation goals ○ Develop a phased program to: 1) implement appropriate on-trail requirements and close areas inappropriate for climbing; 2) construct or retrofit existing climbing access trails (thereby eliminating deficiencies); and 3) eliminate the web of undesignated trails • Develop a permit system for installation of new bolts and replacement of existing bolts in sustainable climbing areas • Create a climbing / bouldering access advisory committee to advise on retrofitting the climbing access system, creation of new sustainable use areas, and implementing the bolt permit system
<p>Dog Walking¹</p>	<p><u>Designation of Areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make changes to designated dog management areas that provide a balance among various dog regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More trails designated as “on leash” ○ More trails on which dog’s are prohibited <p><u>Outreach and Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with dog advocacy groups on activities that will increase compliance with dog management regulations. • Increase the presence and interaction of rangers with dog walkers • Develop a voluntary program for dog voice & sight control certification <p><u>Enforcement and New Regulations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently enforce violations of dog-related ordinances by issuing summonses • Change the dog voice-and-sight control ordinance to more clearly define what the standards are and make the ordinance more enforceable • Add a condition to voice and sight control so that it cannot be exercised within 100 feet of a designated trailhead • Add a condition to voice and sight control that stipulates a maximum distance (100 feet?) that dogs could be away from the handler exercising voice and sight control

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Institute special regulatory provisions that preclude unattended dogs with climbers, boulderers, horseback riders, bicyclists, hang gliders, etc.• Seasonally restrict dogs in all livestock calving areas and vulnerable croplands.• Implement a simple registration permit and designate a limited number of “dog-appropriate” training sites on OSMP. |
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Trail and Infrastructure Improvements

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide fencing and access barriers, where needed, to reduce impacts of dogs and maintain sustainable natural or agricultural conditions• Continue to provide poop bag stations, reusable bag stations, and trash disposal cans where appropriate, in order to support the “pick-it-up, pack-it-out” program |
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¹These strategies are in addition to requiring use in designated areas, sites, or trails.

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PASSIVE RECREATION ACTIVITY	MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES UNIQUE TO THE ACTIVITY
Hang / Paragliding	<u>Designation of Areas</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate launch and landing sites for hang gliding and paragliding • Work with the Rocky Mountain Hang Gliding Association to ensure use of designated sites and low-impact practices • Build access trails and launch pads to contain and minimize resource impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wonderland site (post reclamation) ○ Hogback Trail spur • Enforce the prohibition of hang gliding and paragliding elsewhere
Model Glider Flying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate sites for model glider flying
Fishing¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate and enforce CDOW fishing regulations
Sledding¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make safety improvements in designated sledding areas, if needed
Canoeing, kayaking, and floating¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promulgate regulation changes to clarify that floats and inner tubes are considered boats
Non-Motorized Wheeled Vehicles¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise regulations to permit strollers, joggers, and disability-assisting vehicles on trails that allow bikes • Revise regulations to prohibit in-line skates, skateboards, and mountain boards except on paved trails

¹These strategies are in addition to requiring use in designated areas, sites, or trails.