

DRAFT DESIRED CONDITIONS FOR Libby Geographic Area

ACCESS AND RECREATION

Forest-wide Goal 2b: Sustainable Uses, Values, Products and Services – Improve the capability of the Forests to provide desired sustainable levels of uses, values, products and services.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for your GA:

- Dispersed Recreation Sites
- Developed Recreation Facilities and Dispersed Sites
- Special Forest Products (huckleberries, firewood, mushrooms, etc.)

Desired Condition Statement	Adequate access is provided for a range of recreation opportunities that provide for a quality of life including scenery, firewood gathering, huckleberry picking, hiking, horseback riding, snowmobile use, recreational driving, hunting and ATV use.
Identify Priority Areas or Opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Entire NE slope of Cabinet Mtns.2) Head of Pipe Cr. And Pipe cr. Summit.3) Bear Creek road terminus in east side of Cabinets.
Describe why this is a priority	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The east slope of the Cabinets is one of the most highly used portions of the KNF.2) The head of Pipe Creek (especially East Fork) is a highly popular snowmobile area.3) Bear Creek road is the only road that elderly people can get a close up view of the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness.

Forest-wide Goal 4: Access – Ensure access to National Forest System lands through the maintenance and improvement of roads and trails, while managing within the capability of ecosystems.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Road Access - year-round restricted, seasonally open and year-round restricted
- Road Maintenance
- Roads and Trails – winter recreation
- Roads and Trails – summer motorized recreation
- Roads and Trails – summer non-motorized recreation
- Trailhead facilities

<p>Desired Condition Statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current level of road/trail access is provided. (Don't close any more roads or trails) The Travel Plans match the on-the-ground situation and signing. • Maintain all existing trails to current level. Improve access to trails. • There is some type of access to all drainages. • Coordinate road management with trail use. • Provide non-ambulatory hunting areas. • Provide more handicap access and abilities to drive to the “top of the mountain”. • Horse trailheads provide adequate turn-around for trailers. • Partnerships are established for trail maintenance. • Roads and trails are not vectors for weed establishment (see Vegetation DC) • User conflict is minimized.
<p>Identify Priority Areas</p>	<p>Snowshoe road, Bear Creek Road, Flagstaff Mtn Road, River Road Trail. Possible connection to Troy along river.</p>
<p>Describe why this is a priority</p>	<p>These areas are close to town and get a high amount of use.</p>

GOAL: Have in place a trail management plan, which incorporates an enforceable system for preserving historic saddle stock use travel routes in the revised forest plan

- Access and Recreation
- Trails - CBCH

<p>Desired Condition Statement</p>	<p>Trails are the primary access routes for the public into roadless areas. The forest plan would include a scheduled maintenance program of existing and identified saddle-stock trails around road closure barricades and would provide for adequate turn-around space for trailers in proximity to the closure device.</p>
<p>Identify Priority Areas</p>	<p>Access to Roadless Areas along Cabinet East Face</p>
<p>Describe why this is a priority</p>	<p>Historical significance of saddle-stock use into and within roadless areas and to provide adequate access for saddle stock use.</p>

GOAL: Have in place a trail management plan, which incorporates an enforceable system for preserving historic saddle stock use travel routes in the revised forest plan

- Access and Recreation
- Trails - CBCH

Desired Condition Statement	Maintain travel corridors on trails of 8 foot width, adequate tread-width, and remove obstacles (e.g., barricade bolts)
Identify Priority Areas	Access to Roadless Areas along Cabinet East Face
Describe why this is a priority	Provide safe saddle-stock use into and within roadless areas and provide adequate access for saddle stock use.

GOAL: Increase public access for gathering and recreation activities

- Access and Recreation – (Hanson)

Desired Condition Statement	Provide for temporary opening of closed roads (by gate or barricade) during periods that do not conflict with closure restrictions purposes (whether wildlife or other) for various recreational activities.
Identify Priority Areas	Across the geographic area (various locations) where hiking fishing, firewood gathering or berry picking, would occur – mainly in proximity to communities. Identify roads in low to mid elevations.
Describe why this is a priority	Disperse public use during summer-to-early Fall gathering times (high use periods)

GOAL: Provide opportunities for recreational access of over the snow vehicles

▪ **Access and Recreation - SnoKats**

<p>Desired Condition Statement</p>	<p>Adequate and proactive management of over-the-snow vehicle recreational access is planned and provided within the Libby Geographic area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Work with user-group partnerships in evaluating and planning snowmobile routes B. Evaluate current road closures for possible routes C. Provide clear signing of routes D. Provide opportunities for loop routes E. Provide safe access around closure devices F. Provide adequate parking facilities and consider parking lot size, restroom, and warming-hut facilities. G. Work towards maintaining current open-route densities at same level or above. H. Provide flexibility in changing over-the-snow routes as vegetative conditions change (re-evaluate on 10-15 year cycles)
<p>Identify Priority Areas</p>	<p>Maintain existing routes per the Kootenai Snow Trails Map areas 1,2, & 3.</p>
<p>Describe why this is a priority</p>	<p>Increasing demand for visitor days and facilities by user groups for snow recreation motorized activities</p>



IRAS AND PROPOSED WILDERNESS AREAS

Forest-wide Goal 2a: Wild Lands (Wilderness, Wilderness Study, Recommended Wilderness, and Wild Rivers) – Maintain and improve the capability of wild lands to provide for primitive recreation and a wide array of ecological values.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Reduce impacts of use on sites or areas.
- Establish natural fire regimes in all of these areas.
- Reduce acres of areas infested with noxious weeds.

Potential Descriptive Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Treatment of roadless areas and recommended wilderness
- Special Interest Areas

Desired Condition Statement	Draft Desired Future Condition Statement (DFC) for the IRA's:
	<p>IRA's outside of Recommended Wilderness allocations are managed to protect their roadless character.</p> <p>Snowmobile use continues in (1) areas that do not contain big-game winter range and (2) where conflicts with T & E of Sensitive species can be avoided. Gates are managed to provide safe passage for snowmobiles especially along the east face of the Cabinet Mountains (i.e. Libby, Ramsey, Poorman, Cable, Bear and Cherry Creeks).</p> <p>Trail maintenance continues with the cost-efficient and practical help of chain saws.</p> <p><i>*The Gold Hill West IRA (#176) permits hand-clearing (during the winter of minimum-width, over-the-snow travel ways to access snow play areas, and to serve as connecting travel ways to other existing roads and trails open to snowmobiles.</i></p> <p>Draft DFC for Recommended Wilderness:</p> <p>A Recommended Wilderness proposal for the NE corner of the Cabinet Mountains has been accepted by Congress (this excludes the existing mechanized trail along historic old Hiway 2). An equitable resolution of the proposed Treasure Mtn Ski Area has also been achieved. Trail Maintenance includes the cost-</p>

	<p>efficient and practical help of chain saws during the interim period until Congress has acted.</p> <p><i>*This may be reworded</i></p>
<p>Identify Priority Areas</p>	<p>Cabinet Addition recommended Wilderness. Kootenai River candidate for Wild and Scenic.</p>
<p>Describe why this is a priority</p>	<p>Cabinet Addition is currently in conflict with the Treasure Mtn, Ski area proposal. Kootenai River is a current candidate.</p>



TIMBER PRODUCTION

Forest-wide Goal 2b: Sustainable Uses, Values, Products and Services – Improve the capability of the Forests to provide desired sustainable levels of uses, values, products and services.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Timber sold

<p>Desired Condition Statement</p>	<p>Timber management outside of roadless areas should continue the current level o suitable (Ma’s 11,12,14,15,16 &17) timber acres except:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) West Fork Quartz Creek (Steep area with hemlock) 2) 2) Faces of ridges along East Cabinets (steep and highly visible) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the use of local (county) workforce for forest product industryIncreased utilization and diversification of forest productsImproved ability to react timely to catastrophic wildfire and insect/disease.Economical logging.Reduce need for road constructionEmphasize small sales, stewardship with input from local citizens.Smaller contracts to attract local industry for timber sales and reforestation and thinning.
<p>Identify Priority Areas</p>	<p>All existing suitable acres except where noted above.</p>
<p>Describe why this is a priority</p>	<p>Because the maximum amount of acreage needs to be retained to provide a high level sustainable flow of timber products.</p>

WILDLIFE

Forest-wide Goal 1b: Condition for Species – Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species and to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS) and focal species.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Terrestrial Plants and Wildlife
 - Old Growth Habitat
 - Down wood and cavity nesting habitat
 - Wildlife habitat in support of State wildlife agencies goals.
 - Threatened and Endangered Species
 - Sensitive Plants and Animals

Desired Condition Statement	Maintain the existing situation regarding all of the above items.
Identify Priority Areas	Existing OG, GB, Lynx Wolf.
Describe why this is a priority	

VEGETATION

Forest-wide Goal 1c: Forest Health – Increase the amount of forests restored to or maintained in a healthy condition with reduced risk and damage from fires, insects and diseases, and invasive species.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Weed Risk
- Insect and Disease
- Vegetation Condition and Trend

<p>Desired Condition Statement</p>	<p>A healthy forest that includes reduced fire risk and noxious weeds (especially knapweed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive weed control is active on the forest, with access to weed sites available especially on closed roads and areas with activities. • The public is aware of where and when weed treatment is occurring (establish website). • Inventory will continue for all weed species. • Allowable acres of weed treatment will be maximized. • Fuels are reduced within the WUI. The small diameter ladder fuels etc. and biomass will be utilized.
<p>Identify Priority Areas</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Fire risk areas around Libby. 2) Low to mid elevation especially in the warm/dry areas of the GA. 3) Treat weeds along roads and trails and in the WUI as priority.
<p>Describe why this is a priority</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Because of risk to private property and human life. 2) Because warmer/drier areas are intermingled with private land. 3) Roads and trails are weed vectors.

FIRE RISK

Forest-wide Goal 1c: Forest Health – Increase the amount of forests restored to or maintained in a healthy condition with reduced risk and damage from fires, insects and diseases, and invasive species.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Fire Risk outside Wildland Urban Interface
- Fire Risk within Wildland Urban Interface

Desired Condition Statement	Reduce the fire risk in the area around Libby (wildland /urban interface). This is duplication with the vegetation DFC.
Identify Priority Areas	Developed areas surrounding the town of Libby.
Describe why this is a priority	This is a wildland/urban interface.

WATERSHEDS AND AQUATIC SPECIES

Forest-wide Goal 1a: Watershed Conditions – Restore and protect watershed conditions to provide the water quality and quantity and soil productivity necessary to support ecological functions and intended beneficial uses.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Watersheds Functioning-at-Risk Condition
- Watersheds Not Properly Functioning
- 303d listed streams
- Riparian areas Not Properly Functioning
- Soil Productivity and Integrity

<p>Desired Condition Statement</p>	<p>High quality drinking water is provided in Flower Creek, which is the water supply for Libby.</p> <p>Native fish habitat is maintained and improved</p> <p>Roads are left in place and other alternatives utilized to improve habitat where possible.</p>
<p>Identify Priority Areas</p>	<p>Flower Creek</p>
<p>Describe why this is a priority</p>	<p>Watershed for town of Libby.</p>

Forest-wide Goal 1b: Condition for Species – Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species and to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS) and focal species.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Fisheries – structure, composition and function of aquatic systems
- Habitat connectivity
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Amphibians and native non-salmonid fishes habitat

<p>Desired Condition Statement</p>	<p>Maintain existing situation regarding all of the above.</p>
<p>Identify Priority Areas</p>	<p>Existing Bull Trout streams.</p>
<p>Describe why this is a priority</p>	<p>Required by law, regulation or policy, new forest-wide management direction will be adequate for this GA.</p>

OTHER FOREST-WIDE GOALS/OBJECTIVES

Forest-wide Goal 2b: Sustainable Uses, Values, Products and Services – Improve the capability of the Forests to provide desired sustainable levels of uses, values, products and services.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Grazing
- Personal Use Minerals (personal use, common rock material and recreational use)
- Mineral Withdrawals
- Abandoned Mines
- Historic Properties – identify, evaluate and nominate
- Historic Properties – protect and preserve
- Scenery Management
- Research Natural Areas

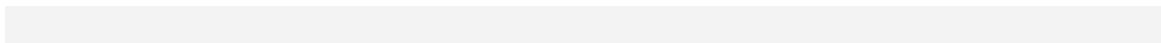
Desired Condition Statement	<p>The viewshed around Libby provides for a high quality of life for residents. Snowshoe Creek is recovered and provides a functioning fishery. Phase out grazing due to conflicts (noxious weeds) Maintain existing Research Natural Areas. Take care of Snowshoe Mine. Existing valid minim claims would continue with current authorized access through their Plans of Operations.</p>
Identify Priority Areas	<p>Entire viewshed of Libby. Headwaters of Snowshoe Creek.</p>
Describe why this is a priority	<p>People value the viewshed very highly and it is one of the reasons people live here even though the economy is difficult. Snowshoe Creek is polluted from mine wastes.</p>

**Forest-wide Goal 3: Community Development and Public Involvement
 – Provide assistance to rural communities and private landowners.
 Promote better management of National Forest System lands by
 providing opportunities for public involvement.**

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Community Assistance
- Information, Interpretation and Education
- Partnerships, Volunteers and Community Groups

<p>Desired Condition Statement</p>	
<p>Identify Priority Areas</p>	
<p>Describe why this is a priority</p>	



Forest-wide Goal 5a: Recognize and maintain culturally significant species and the habitat necessary to support healthy, sustainable, and harvestable populations. Recognize and protect traditional cultural properties.

Potential Desired Condition Topics for Libby GA:

- Consultation Agreement

Desired Condition Statement	Kootenai Falls is protected.
Identify Priority Areas	Kootenai Falls
Describe why this is a priority	Important site for Kootenai-Salish