



RECREATION RESOURCES



RECREATION RESOURCES DESIGN TEAM

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INTRODUCTION TO RR CREDITS

The West currently leads the nation in outdoor recreation participation with over 80% of residents in Idaho, Wyoming, Montana and Utah reporting that they regularly participate in at least one outdoor recreation activity. The top seven recreational activities (out of 26) cited by those visiting Western national forests are, in order, viewing scenery, relaxing, hiking/walking, viewing wildlife, driving for pleasure, downhill skiing, and fishing. Survey data for the six national forests in the Greater Yellowstone region report the same top five with “viewing wildlife” ranked #2.



Recreation use trends in the Greater Yellowstone region have been examined recently by specialists from Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, six national forests and two national wildlife refuges. Their review of recreation trends in the spring, summer and fall months revealed that:

- The region’s national forests, which receive visitation primarily from local areas, are likely to see significant increases in recreation use as adjacent communities expand their populations. Semi-primitive front country near these rapidly growing communities is already showing the result of cumulative pressure from both residents and visitors. These are the places that will require focused attention in the near future to prevent unacceptable resource damage and visitor conflict.
- Three major challenges expect to confront recreation managers in the future: 1) the need to proactively address issues associated with new types of recreation due to changing technology, 2) the need to manage social conflict, particularly between the growing interest in “quiet”, accessible recreation and the growing interest in adrenaline/challenge recreation, and 3) the need to secure alternative sources of funding for recreation infrastructure needs, planning, use management and monitoring.

The GY-Framework responds to these agency concerns by encouraging its projects to address the issue of recreational carrying capacity on adjacent or nearby public lands. Points will be given to those developers who work with land management agencies to minimize the impact of their development on recreation resources and help construct public recreational facilities. Within this credit category, additional points will be given to those who seek to 1) educate their constituencies via interpretive signage and programs, 2) reduce user conflicts and encourage ethical outdoor behavior and 3) help resolve public/private land and river access issues.

A credit for demonstrating sustainable operations is also provided in this category. Points are awarded for greening any existing commercial recreation operation, such as golf course, ski resorts, hunting/fishing guide services, etc. as demonstrations of treading lightly on the land.

Innovation and creative outdoor education programs are encouraged, and exemplary performance will be awarded additional points.

RR CREDIT 1: CARRYING CAPACITY

1 - 2 POINTS

INTENT

To preserve high quality public and private recreation resources by reducing the negative impacts of increasing numbers of users.

REQUIREMENTS

Option 1:

For projects **on or adjacent to public land** that may cause potential impact to the environment and/or quality of recreation experiences:

Carrying Capacity Assessment and Plan: Assess your project’s impact on public land recreation resources and opportunities in cooperation with appropriate resource management agencies, nonprofit organizations and interested businesses and individuals. Identify where recreational carrying capacity limits are likely to be approached or exceeded; note potential impacts from increased use, and outline mitigation options.



Outline and submit to the lead resource agency a consensus plan for mitigation that is collaborative in approach. (1 point)

AND FOR AN ADDITIONAL POINT

Plan Implementation. Assist public agencies in funding and implementing the mitigation plan created above using the calculation shown below that determines the appropriate investment value for your size of development. Submit a letter of completion from the lead agency. (1 point)

Investment Calculation: Use this formula to determine the minimum value of investment required to implement your mitigation strategy. This is based upon the total number of recreationists who are likely to be attracted to public lands in your area of impact. The investment value may be fulfilled in any combination of donated funds, volunteer labor, materials, expertise or equipment contributed to the mitigation project.

(Number of people) x (portion of year people are present) x (\$100 per person)

Example: For a real estate development planning 100 houses, assuming on-average 3 people per household x 1.0 (year-round residents) would be: $300 \times 1 \times 100 = \$30,000$ of value.

Option 2:

For projects on **private land** where impacts of increasing use would affect the quality of recreation opportunities on your project and in the immediate vicinity:

Carrying Capacity Assessment and Plan: For all recreational components of the project, briefly describe the carrying capacities (i.e. ecological, community, perceptual - subjective or spatial - design) relevant to the project's activities and numbers of recreationists. Identify threshold indicators for determining limits of those capacities, and describe what measures will be implemented to avoid approaching or exceeding those capacities. (2 points)

For municipalities, counties, or regulatory agencies:

Document reduction in barriers:

For Option 1, "They" refers to public land managers, i.e., Federal or State land managers. Federal and State bureaucratic processes for involving partners in projects are sometimes cumbersome to the point of being discouraging.

Document incentives provided:

For Option 1, there are no incentives realized currently for private developers to work with public land management agencies, except through tax deductions for contributions.

For Option 2, there are incentives in place for most counties and cities, i.e., for local governments.

Document requirements that support this credit:

For Option 1, there is no requirement in the Greater Yellowstone Region (GYR) for private developers to work with public land management agencies to address carrying capacity.



Create a conservation easement with a clause that ensures public access to public/private land or streams and provide relevant signing. **(1 point)**

AND FOR AN ADDITIONAL POINT

Create, maintain and update public amenities (picnic tables, restroom, interpretive sign, etc.) at access points. **(1 point)**

RR CREDIT 4: OUTDOOR ETHICS AND EDUCATION

1 - 2 POINTS

INTENT

To promote common understanding and appreciation of bioregional resources, and minimize environmental and facility impacts through educational opportunities that teach conservation and ecological concepts.

REQUIREMENTS

Create a comprehensive interpretive program for residents, visitors, and/or employees that accurately interprets the region’s natural history and the site’s specific ecological, cultural, historical, and geological features. **(1 point)**

AND FOR AN ADDITIONAL POINT

Institute ongoing educational programs for users and employees that will minimize user impacts upon the site and recreational facilities. These programs should demonstrate how best management practices will provide for continued ecosystem functioning and long-term resource and facility protection. Utilize recreation impact monitoring methods and document the monitoring results as part of the outdoor ethics training program. **(1 point)**

RR CREDIT 5: REWARDING SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS

1 - 2 POINTS

INTENT

To encourage sustainable operation of recreation facilities by acknowledging compliance with nationally and/or regionally-recognized programs.

REQUIREMENTS

Graduation from YBP UnCommon Sense Program. **(1 point)**

OR

Registration and first-year certification by LEED-Existing Buildings program. **(1 point)**

AND FOR AN ADDITIONAL POINT

Proof of qualifying membership or initial selection by organization certifying sustainable operations and additional proof of measurement, accreditation, successful examination or qualified selection in organization or achievement by third party. Said proof to be directly relevant to long and short term sustainability in the daily operation of facilities. Example organizations are shown in Potential Technologies and Strategies below. **(1 point)**

OR



Certification/implementation/analysis of project by organization or recognizable standards in measurable documentation. (1 point)