



Caring for  
your natural resources ...  
now and forever

June 9, 2008

Thank you for your continued interest in the Ahtanum Recreation Planning Workgroup. The Department of Natural Resources and the Workgroup have begun the suitability analysis process. Suitability maps are used to identify the factors that will guide the planning of trails, trailheads and campgrounds in the Ahtanum State Forest. Varying levels of suitability are identified for the recreation uses that occur in the Ahtanum. The level of suitability assists in determining what types of recreation are most appropriate for specific locations.

Suitability criteria are divided into three categories; biological considerations, geology and soils, and management considerations. Consultation is currently occurring with biologists, ecologists, geologists, soil scientists, and land managers to determine factors that could potentially affect recreation planning. For example, the biological component includes assessment of endangered, threatened, and sensitive plant and animal species. The geology and soils component will map slope stability and steepness. In the land management component, items such as leases and easements and cultural resources are analyzed.

When this process is completed, the maps are overlaid to identify areas with long-term planning considerations. These maps provide a visual template for the Workgroup to use during the planning process. With the assistance of this tool, the Workgroup will be able to consider the recommendations best suited for each type of recreation and seasonal use. This process will aid the planning Workgroup in making recommendations that best provide for a safe, sustainable and enjoyable recreation experience.

The Workgroup will begin to use the finalized suitability maps to develop management strategies over the coming months. In addition, they will be taking a field trip to visit existing recreation facilities and trails in the Ahtanum State Forest with the goal of identifying issues of importance.

We encourage you to stay informed regarding the Ahtanum Recreation Planning Workgroups' progress. We look forward to working with you to create a plan that will provide for a future of safe, sustainable recreation in the Ahtanum State Forest. If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

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