



Maroon Bells – Snowmass Wilderness Overnight Visitor Use Management Plan

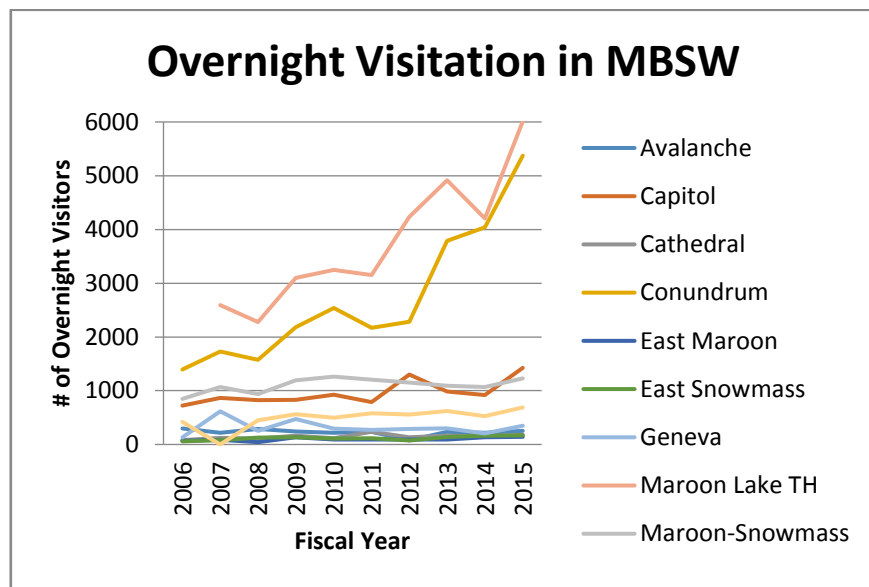
FACT SHEET: this fact sheet provides basic information about the Plan and how to comment.

OVERVIEW: The White River National Forest (WRNF) and the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest – (GMUG) is proposing an Overnight Visitor Use Management Plan (‘the plan’) for the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness (MBSW). Overnight visitation to the MBSW has increased 115% on the top ten trails since 2007. Concentrated use patterns have exacerbated social and physical resource degradation. The increasing trend of overnight visitation to the MBSW needs to be addressed in order to preserve the wild nature of the MBSW for current and future generations.

PURPOSE & NEED FOR ACTION: In response to increasing natural resource degradation issues and management challenges, the proposed plan was developed to provide for comprehensive management of overnight visitor use within the MBSW. The plan seeks to balance the preservation of natural conditions by addressing biophysical impacts resulting from overnight use, while continuing to provide opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities.

Proposed Management Action:

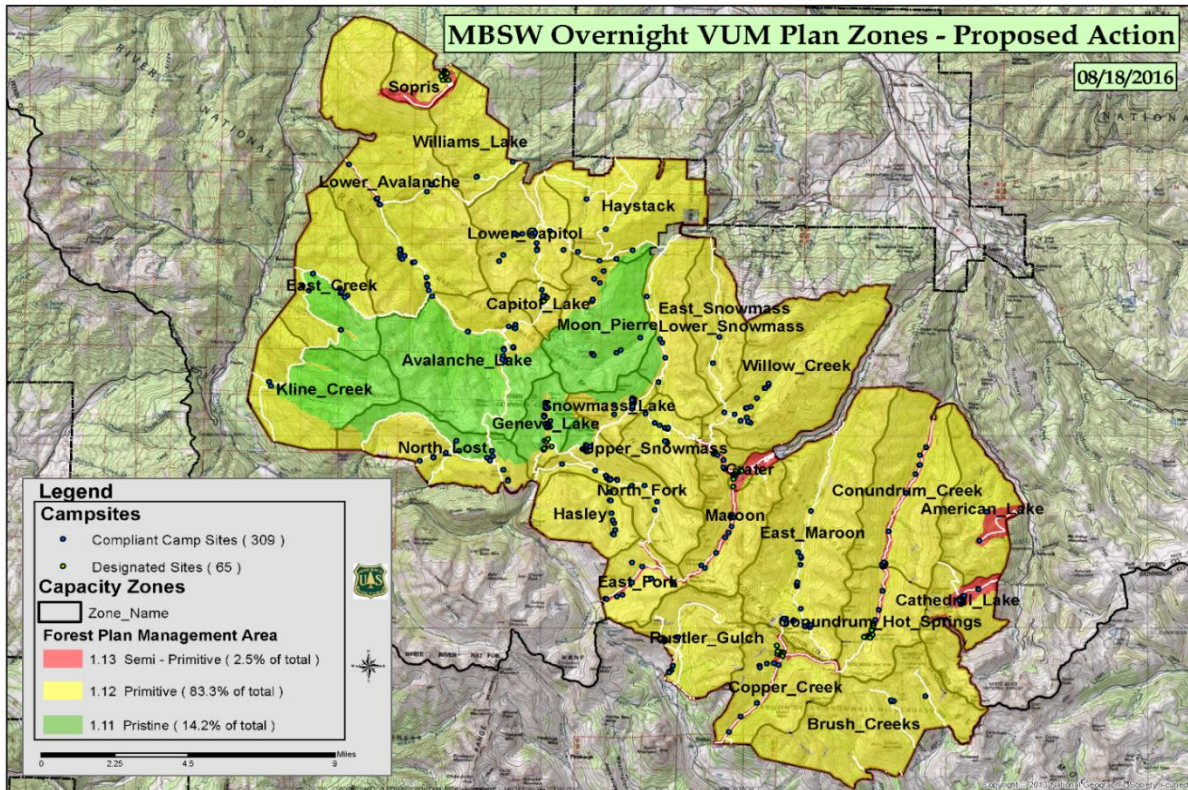
The Plan incorporates current Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) standards and guidelines into measurable indicators and thresholds for overnight camping zones. In accordance with LRMP objectives this plan would define a specific number of



Groups At One Time (GAOT) per camping zone in the MBSW that can be accommodated. If this sustainable use level is exceeded, a mandatory overnight permit system and a suite of other management tools may be implemented to maintain overnight visitor use at a sustainable level.

HOW TO COMMENT: The Legal Notice for the proposed plan will be published on Nov. 3 which will begin the 30-day scoping period for the proposed Maroon Bells – Snowmass Wilderness Overnight Visitor Use Management Plan.





During the scoping process, the Forest Service formally asks the public to look at the proposed plan and provide feedback. These comments will be helpful to develop the issues addressed in the Environmental Assessment (EA). Respondents should include: (1) name, address, telephone number, and organization represented, if any; (2) reference the “Maroon Bells – Snowmass Wilderness Overnight Visitor Use Management Plan” and (3) specific facts, concerns or issues, and supporting reasons why they should be considered.

Specific written comments on the proposed project will be accepted for 30 calendar days following publication of this notice in the Glenwood Springs Post Independent. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the scoping period. The regulations prohibit extending the length of the scoping period. Written comments must be submitted via mail, fax, electronically, or in person (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays) to: Scott Fitzwilliams, Forest Supervisor, c/o Erin Carey, Project Leader, 620 Main Street, Carbondale, CO 81623, FAX: (970)404-3163. Electronic comments including attachments can be submitted to <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//CommentInput?Project=49388>.

Information will also be made available at a public open house: Nov. 15 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Basalt Library, 14 Midland Ave, Basalt, CO 81621.

NOTE – If any fee program is associated with this proposal, a separate public comment process will be available prior to implementation of a fee for a limited entry “special recreation permit” in accordance with Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) if authorized through this decision. Questions and comments on the details of a “fee based permit” system delivery, fees and availability will be more pertinent to that secondary process.

For more information visit <http://www.fs.usda.gov/whiteriver>

