

## RECREATION SETTING CHARACTERISTICS MATRIX

### PHYSICAL COMPONENT – Qualities of the Landscape

	<i>Primitive Classification</i>	<i>Back Country Classification</i>	<i>Middle Country Classification</i>	<i>Front Country Classification</i>	<i>Rural Classification</i>	<i>Urban Classification</i>
<b>Remoteness (approx. distance from routes)</b>	More than ½ mile from either mechanized or motorized routes.	Within ½ mile of mechanized routes.	Within ½ mile of four-wheel drive vehicle, ATV and motorcycles routes.	Within ½ mile of low-clearance or passenger vehicle routes (includes unpaved County roads and private land routes).	Within ½ mile of paved/primary roads and highways.	Within ½ mile of streets and roads within municipalities and along highways.
<b>Naturalness (landscape texture form, line, color)</b>	Undisturbed natural landscape.	Natural landscape with any modifications in harmony with surroundings and not visually obvious or evident (e.g. stock ponds, trails).	Character of the natural landscape retained. A few modifications contrast with character of the landscape (e.g. fences, primitive roads).	Character of the natural landscape partially modified but none overpower natural landscape (e.g. roads, structures, utilities).	Character of the natural landscape considerably modified (agriculture, residential or industrial).	Urbanized developments dominate landscape.
<b>Facilities</b>	No structures. Foot/horse and water trails only.	Developed trails made mostly of native materials such as log bridges. Structures are rare and isolated.	Maintained and marked trails, simple trailhead developments and basic toilets.	Rustic facilities such as campsites, restrooms, trailheads, and interpretive displays.	Modern facilities such as campgrounds, group shelters, boat launches, and occasional exhibits.	Elaborate full-service facilities such as laundries, restaurants, and groceries.

### SOCIAL COMPONENT – Qualities Associated with Use

	<i>Primitive Classification</i>	<i>Back Country Classification</i>	<i>Middle Country Classification</i>	<i>Front Country Classification</i>	<i>Rural Classification</i>	<i>Urban Classification</i>
<b>Contacts (avg. with any other group)</b>	Fewer than 3 encounters/day at camp sites and fewer than 6 encounters/day on travel routes.	3–6 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campsites) and 7–15 encounters/day on travel routes.	7–14 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., staging areas) and 15–29 encounters/ day on travel routes.	15–29 encounters/day off travel routes (e.g., campgrounds) and 30 or more encounters/day on travel routes.	People seem to be generally everywhere.	Busy place with other people constantly in view.
<b>Group Size (average - other than you own)</b>	Fewer than or equal to 3 people per group.	4–6 people per group.	7–12 people per group.	13–25 people per group.	26–50 people per group.	Greater than 50 people per group.
<b>Evidence of Use</b>	No alteration of the natural terrain. Footprints only observed. Sounds of people rare.	Areas of alteration uncommon. Little surface vegetation wear observed. Sounds of people infrequent.	Small areas of alteration. Surface vegetation showing wear with some bare soils. Sounds of people occasionally heard.	Small areas of alteration prevalent. Surface vegetation gone with compacted soils observed. Sounds of people regularly heard.	A few large areas of alteration. Surface vegetation absent with hardened soils. Sounds of people frequently heard.	Large areas of alteration prevalent. Some erosion. Constantly hear people.

### OPERATIONAL COMPONENT – Conditions Created by Management and Controls over Recreation Use

	<i>Primitive Classification</i>	<i>Back Country Classification</i>	<i>Middle Country Classification</i>	<i>Front Country Classification</i>	<i>Rural Classification</i>	<i>Urban Classification</i>
<b>Access (types of travel allowed)</b>	Foot, horse, and non-motorized float boat travel.	Mountain bikes and perhaps other mechanized use, but all is non-motorized.	Four-wheel drives, all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, or snowmobiles in addition to non-motorized, mechanized use.	Two-wheel drive vehicles predominant, but also four wheel drives and non-motorized, mechanized use.	Ordinary highway auto and truck traffic is characteristic.	Wide variety of street vehicles and highway traffic is ever-present.
<b>Visitor Services (and information)</b>	No maps or brochures available on-site. Staff rarely present to provide on-site assistance.	Basic maps, staff infrequently present (e.g. seasonally, high use periods) to provide on-site assistance.	Area brochures and maps, staff occasionally (e.g. most weekends) present to provide on-site assistance.	Information materials describe recreation areas & activities, staff periodically present (e.g. weekdays & weekends).	Information described to the left, plus experience and benefit descriptions, staff regularly present (e.g. almost daily).	Information described to the left, plus regularly scheduled on-site outdoor demonstrations and clinics.
<b>Management Controls</b>	No on-site posting/signing of visitor regulations, interpretive information or ethics. Few use restrictions.	Basic user regulations at key access points. Minimum use restrictions.	Some regulatory and ethics signing. Moderate use restrictions. (e.g. camping, human waste).	Rules, regulations and ethics clearly posted. Use restrictions, limitations and/or closures.	Regulations strict and ethics prominent. Use may be limited by permit, reservation, etc.	Enforcement in addition to rules to reduce conflicts, hazards, and resource damage.

NOTE: This matrix can be customized to meet particular planning needs: 1) classes can be added, split, or merged; 2) characteristics can be added or deleted; 3) class names can be changed; and 4) the text can be modified. However, the concept of a spectrum must remain intact.