

RECREATION PLANNING

This lecture will cover:

- Recreation planning approaches
- Assessment of demand
- Assessment of supply
- The landscape as a setting for recreation
- Recreational land planning

Recreation planning approaches

- Recreation planning is about matching the supply of recreation to the demand for it in such a way that the resource is not degraded.
- Recreation must be sustainable in relation to all three pillars of sustainability:
 - Social (it is a social activity)
 - Environmental (protecting the environment that is being visited)
 - Economic (generating market and non-market benefits)

Assessment of demand 1.

- What is the pattern of demand? How is it changing?
- Look at local, regional, national and international trends.
- Carry out surveys to assess local demands eg questionnaires of the local population: find out what they do, where they go, what they think, what they want and who they are.

Assessment of demand 2.

- Interview users of sites (your own site) regularly to find out who does what and what they think.
- Look at where the people are in relation to your site and how this changes with development, new transport infrastructure, new houses, changes in demographic structure over time.

Assessment of demand 3.

- Regular surveys will show how uses change – numbers of people and the balance of activities. It will also show how new demands are developing.
- If the area is visited by tourists, find out what they want through surveys or via tourist organisations.

Assessment of supply

- Recreation supply concerns how much and of what type of recreational area suitable for which activities lies where in relation to the demand.
- An inventory includes the types of area, their ownership, size, composition, character, location, accessibility, management structure, current uses and potential uses.

The landscape as a setting for recreation

- The setting for recreation is an important part of the experience.
- The landscape may be able to absorb a wide range of uses (have a high carrying capacity).
- It may have limitations or be fragile, especially for some uses (low carrying capacity)

The extent of the land base

- The size of the recreation area will determine how many visitors and how much use can be accommodated before it starts to degrade with over use.
- Large areas permit zoning of activities and for some areas to be rested if over-used.
- Some uses can be dispersed, reducing impact.
- Other land uses can be accommodated with less risk of conflict.

Landscape variety

- The variety and range of components suggest what might be possible:
 - Topographic variety in form and elevation.
 - Vegetation variety in composition, type and structure.
 - Water, both still and moving
 - Wildlife.
 - Cultural historical elements.

Carrying capacity

- This is the robustness of fragility of landscape, habitats and wildlife and their resilience to the pressures of visitors.
- Rocks and soils may vary in their strength and erodability eg granite, clay or sand
- Vegetation can be fragile and slow to recover eg montane vegetation
- Forests can absorb a lot of people visually.

Constructed facilities

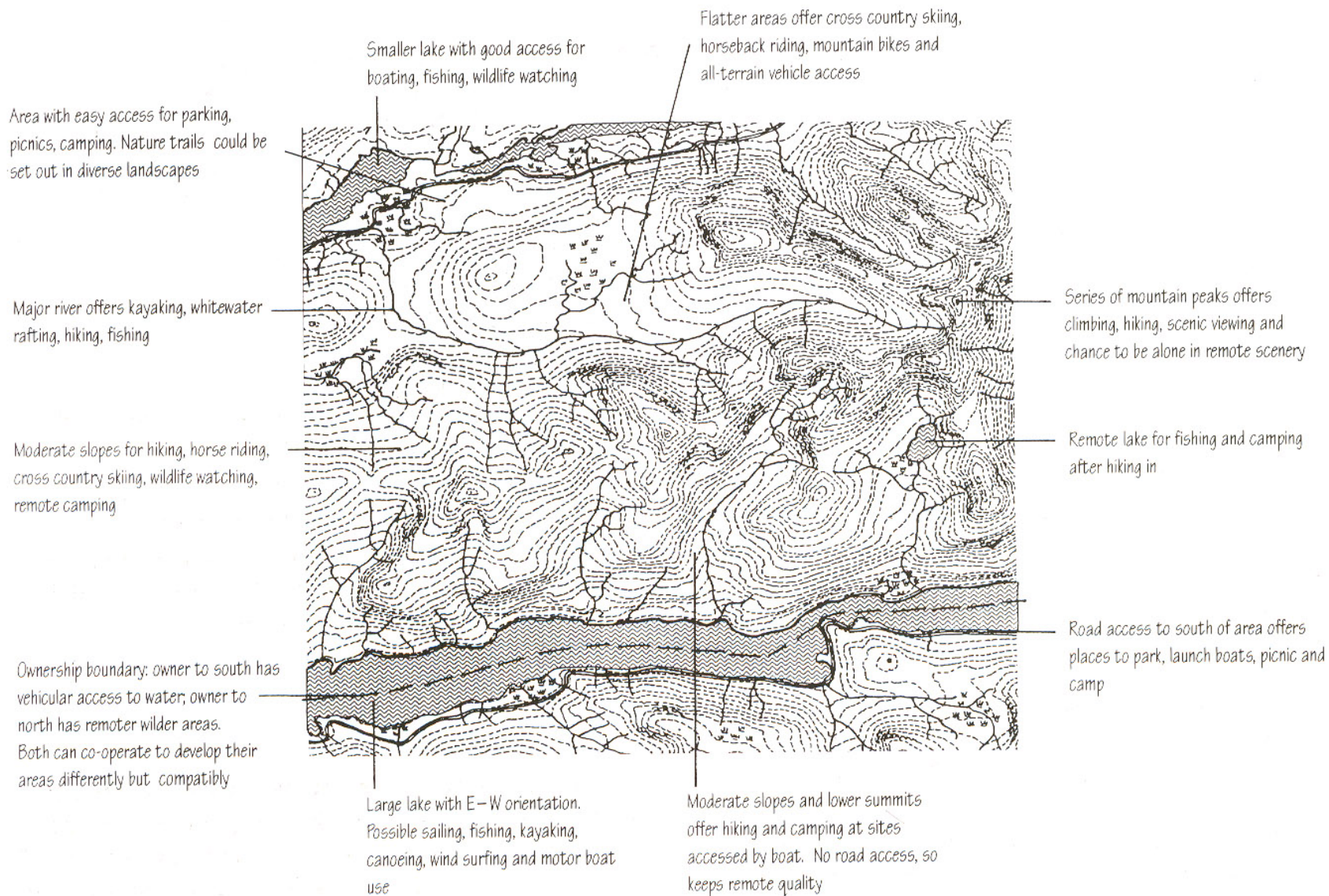
- Facilities such as surfaced trails or boardwalks can increase the physical carrying capacity.
- Facilities can also stimulate demand and affect the visual carrying capacity as people are concentrated into certain areas.
- Constructed facilities can be important for facilitating inclusive access.

Alternative opportunities in the area

- Some larger providers eg forest services may have been accustomed to few alternative providers of recreation in the past.
- Smaller private operators may face competition.
- Neighbours could cooperate to maximise their strengths

Appraisal of opportunities

- Inventory the landscape.
- Classify it in terms of landscape character and special places of strong *Genius Loci*.
- Identify the types of recreation best suited to the area, or different parts of the area, that fit in with the known or estimated demand.
- Identify potential conflicts between uses and ways to overcome them.



A plan showing the possible range of opportunities for recreation in a landscape. Co-operation with neighbouring owners should always be considered.

Corstorphine Hill South



Site description.

Lying on a rocky hill top overlooking the city and the Firth of Forth. Views out at the edge, otherwise internal views.

Woodland Type. Mature or over-mature, mixed broadlvd woodland with some conifers. No understorey under Beech - elsewhere mixed u/storey.



KEY:		VEGETATION
THE ROUTE:		
path		mixed woodland edge
path descending in direction of arrow		
path in valley		mixed woodland thicket
path on ridge		
VIEWS:		
open view		dense coniferous plantation
truncated view		
long uninterrupted view		predominantly tall canopy woodland
broken glimpse		
SENSE OF ENCLOSURE:		
railings - wall/fence		group or line of single standing mature trees
		single stands mature trees
		WATER: ditch stream/river

Site observation.

A popular spot for dog walkers to stop and let dogs run around/play ball, play with other dogs; dogwalkers talking to other dogwalkers.

Users observed:

Great numbers: young families, couples or groups of all ages mostly with dogs; mountain bikers, solo or in pairs (incl. 2x 17yr old boys); one lone male jogger; occasional single woman with dogs; most higher socio/economic groups.

Scale:



SWOT analysis

This is a method of analysing the interactions between factors, both internal and external to the area.

- SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.
- Prepare a matrix and mark up a map with the factors.

STRENGTHS

Size of area gives high carrying capacity

Presence of water in various forms and sizes

Varied topography gives range of landscapes

Road access to north and south

Undeveloped character

Diverse habitats and wildlife

WEAKNESSES

Core area is a long way from public access by road

Lake to south is barrier to access

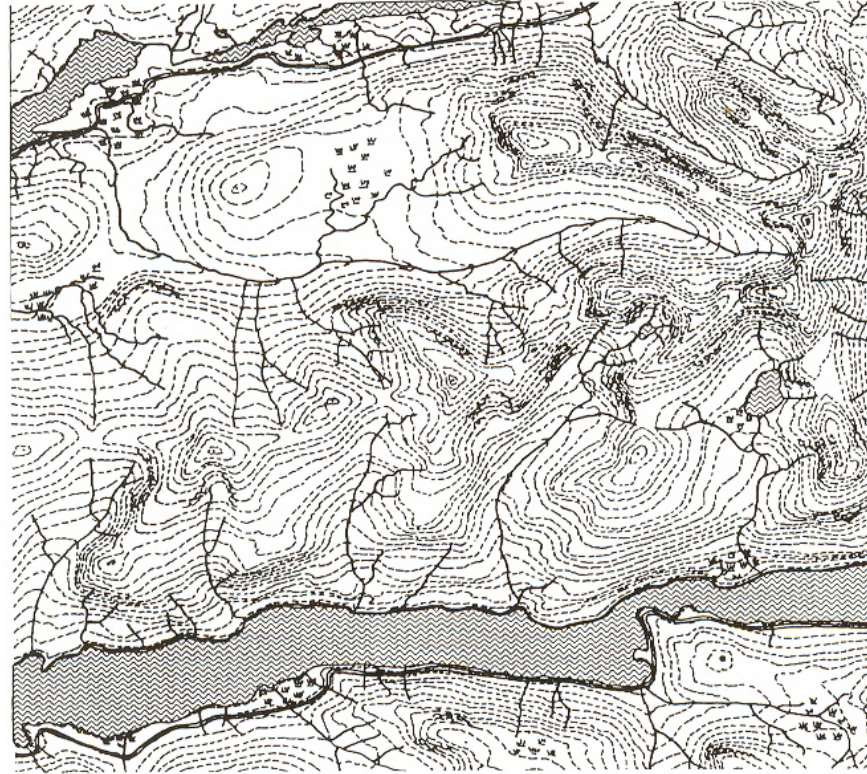
Peat bogs and marshes are unsuitable for access or use

Climate and weather are unpredictable

Terrain is rough and steep

Water is cold

Insects are plentiful in summer



OPPORTUNITIES

To develop a range of recreation activities in keeping with the landscape

To protect vulnerable habitats from development

To relieve recreation pressure from heavily used areas nearby

To develop an integrated plan for management to ensure minimal site degradation

To supply the demand for high quality facilities and landscape settings

THREATS

Commercial exploitation of forested areas with good access

Hydroelectric development to the southern lake

Forest fires, arson and vandalism

Uncontrolled access by motorized vehicles such as boats, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles

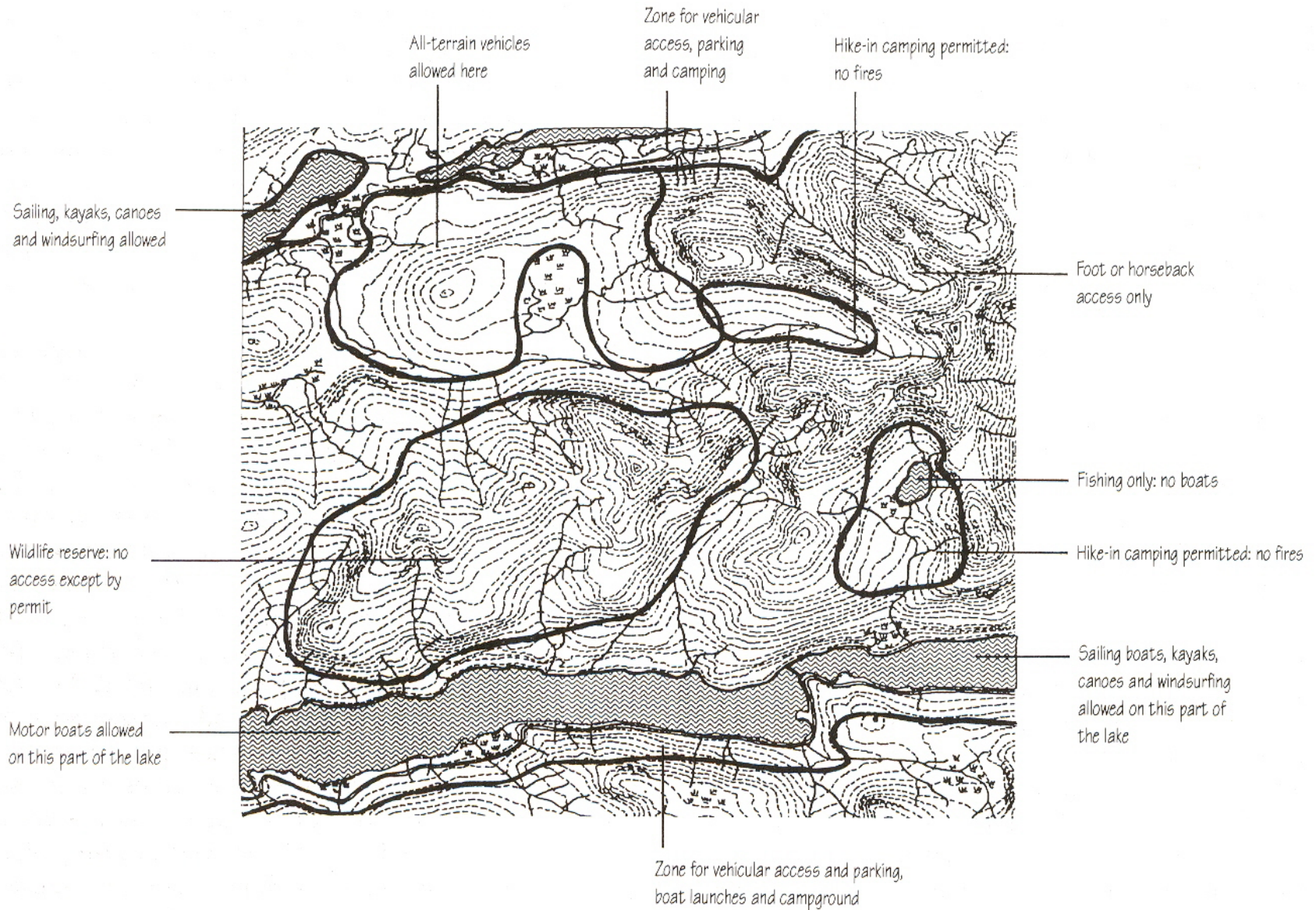
Mineral exploration

A plan showing how the landscape has been appraised using a SWOT analysis.

Zoning

Zoning is one of the major ways in which to resolve conflicts between users and between users and the landscape.

- Zoning may be by space or by time.
- Zones may be physical or aesthetic, spatial or linear, daily or seasonal, or a combination of these and others.



Examples of spatial zoning of use applied to a landscape.

Planning to reduce negative factors and perceptions

There are a number of factors that prevent people from making the most of their visit:

- Are we allowed here?
- Are we going to get lost?
- Am I going to hurt myself?
- Am I going to be attacked by animals?
- Are the trails suitable for me?
- Am I likely to be attacked by other people?

Principles of sustainable recreation

1.

As far as possible any recreation provision should be planned and designed with sustainability in mind. Some principles are:

- Wise use – non-renewable resources should be used sparingly. Fuel for cars is one of the main issues. Consider access and transport in developments.

Principles of sustainable recreation

2.

- Carrying capacity – renewable resources should be used within their capacity for regeneration. Sites with a low capacity should be used with care.
- Environmental quality – recreational use is increasing as a major land use and is having an impact on other aspects on other aspects of natural and cultural heritage.

Principles of sustainable recreation

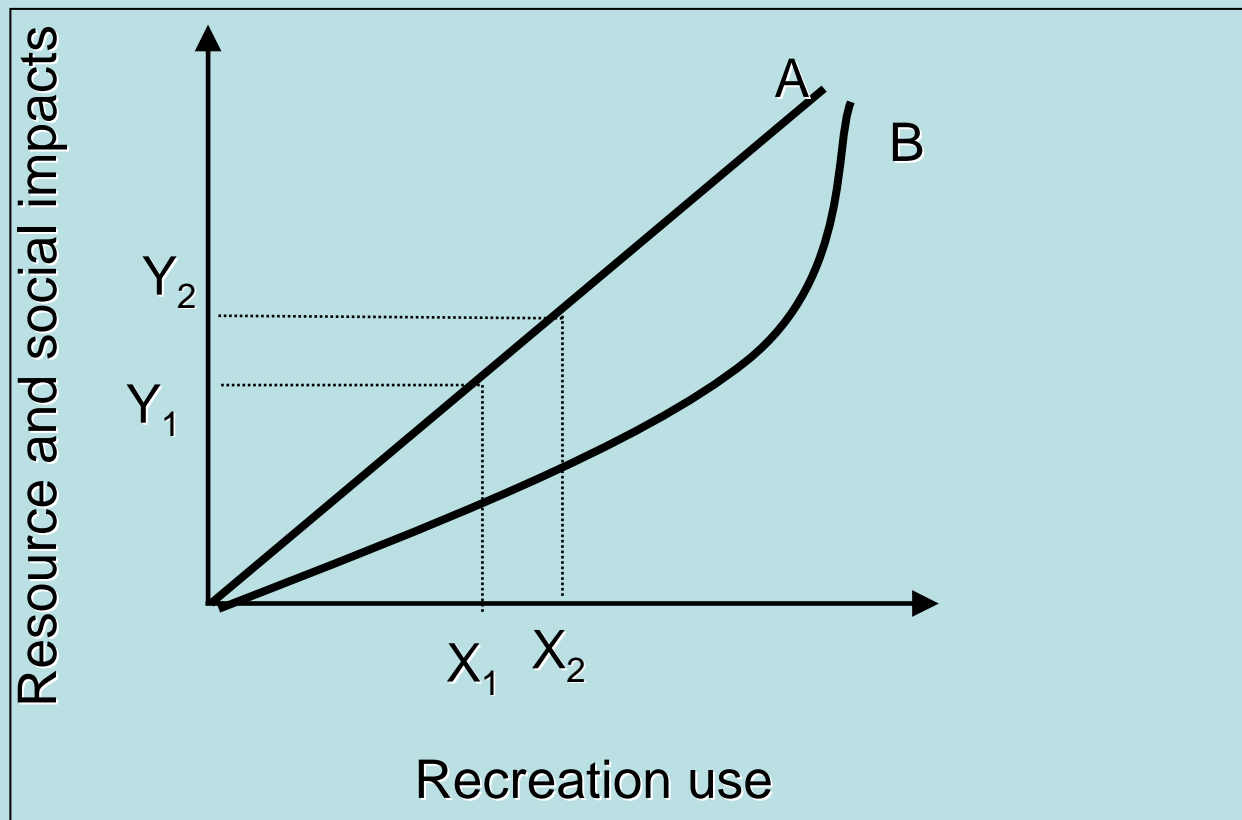
3.

- Precautionary principle – in situations of complexity and uncertainty we should act in a precautionary manner. Identify the limits of acceptable change.
- Shared benefits – there should be an equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of any development between users, landowners and communities.

The concept: carrying capacity

The maximum level of use an area can sustain, as determined by natural factors.

With tourism/recreation, there is an **ecological capacity**, and a **social capacity** (the impact on visitor experiences)



The Limits of Acceptable Change framework

- 1 – identify areas of concern and issues
- 2 – define and describe management objectives
- 3 – select indicators of resource and social conditions
- 4 – inventory resource and social conditions
- 5 – specify standards for resource and social conditions
- 6 – specify alternatives
- 7 – identify management actions for each alternative
- 8 – evaluate and select an alternative
- 9 – implement actions and monitor conditions



Indicators (measures of resource or social conditions)

- Should be measured cost-effectively and accurately
- Should reflect some relationship to the amount/type of use occurring
- Should be related to user concerns (social indicators)
- Must be responsive to management control

Indicators (measures of resource or social conditions)

Examples of indicators

- Water quality
- Soil compaction
- Vegetation cover
- Number of encounters

Standards (a level beyond which change is unacceptable)

- Standards may vary between opportunity classes (ROS) or other zoning / regions
- May reflect existing conditions or future targets
- Monitoring and evaluation provide means for revision and improvement

Indicator	Standard
Number of encounters with other parties	<i>No more than 1 [6] encounter with another party per day</i>
People at one time at selected sites	<i>No more than 20 people on a 50m section of trail</i>
Exposed tree roots	<i>No more than 4 trees per target campsite</i>

DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

1. Emphasise the contrast between city and wilderness – the organised and human dominated versus the wild and uncivilised – in the layout of areas and the use of materials.
2. The design of the visit – how do people visit and area and what decisions do they take – design through their eyes.





