

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Washington, D.C. 20240



In Reply Refer To:
FWS/ANRS-NRCP/061082

SEP 21 2015

Memorandum

To: Chair, Interagency Wilderness Policy Council

From: Chair, Interagency Wilderness Steering Committee

Subject: Interagency Wilderness Steering Committee's *Keeping It Wild 2* Recommendations

Following publication in 2008 of *Keeping It Wild: An Interagency Strategy to Monitor Trends in Wilderness Character Across the National Wilderness Preservation System*, the four wilderness-managing agencies implemented wilderness character monitoring. A March 2014 interagency workshop organized by the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute identified lessons learned from initial monitoring efforts, which led to the development of the forthcoming publication, *Keeping It Wild 2: An Updated Interagency Strategy to Monitor Trends in Wilderness Character Across the National Wilderness Preservation System*. Once published, *Keeping it Wild 2* will replace the 2008 publication.

The changes incorporated in *Keeping It Wild 2* are not radical; they are refinements that help to clarify points of confusion that had emerged as people began to implement *Keeping It Wild*. Appendix 2 of *Keeping It Wild 2* describes the key changes made. (See Attachment)

The Interagency Wilderness Steering Committee (IWSC) recommends that the Interagency Wilderness Policy Council (IWPC) accept the following actions, which will improve interagency consistency and coordination in wilderness character monitoring. The far-reaching implications of these actions will require ongoing leadership, oversight, data management, training, and reporting. Such monitoring will also help fulfill the Wilderness Act's mandate to preserve wilderness character and secure the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness for generations to come.

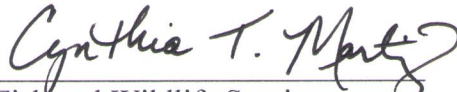
RECOMMENDED ACTIONS/KEY POINTS:

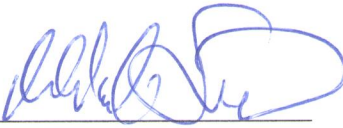
1. The IWPC formally accepts *Keeping It Wild 2* as the interagency strategy for monitoring trends in wilderness character across the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). The four wilderness-managing agencies will use the revised strategy to implement the first priority of *2020 Vision*: "Complete wilderness character inventories across the NWPS using standardized interagency protocols and institutionalize ongoing monitoring."
2. Each agency will formally develop its own implementation strategy to provide leadership, oversight, and training for wilderness character monitoring to ensure quality control, tracking of accomplishments, and reporting of same within the agency.
3. The IWSC will formally charter an interagency team to provide leadership, oversight, quality control, and updating of the strategy.
4. Each agency will determine the content, timing, and distribution of its annual wilderness character monitoring reports; these reports will be as consistent as possible across the agencies.
5. Each agency will formally designate a data steward to facilitate and administer use of the existing wilderness character monitoring database.

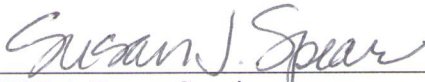
6. Each agency will review and update its completed wilderness character baseline assessment reports and online database entries to ensure that they conform to *Keeping It Wild 2*.
7. Each agency will adopt a single set of measures to assess the trend in wilderness character for each wilderness that is managed by more than one agency; similarly, each agency will adopt a single set of measures for each wilderness managed by more than one administrative unit within a single agency (e.g., a BLM wilderness area that straddles two states).

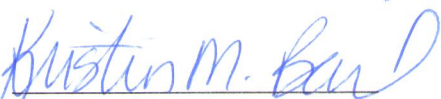
Approved: the Interagency Wilderness Steering Committee is authorized to implement these actions.

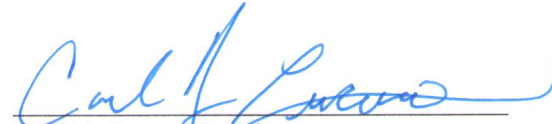

 National Park Service
 Associate Director, Visitor and Resource
 Protection

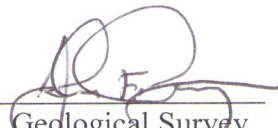

 Fish and Wildlife Service
 Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System


 National Park Service
 Associate Director, Natural Resources
 Stewardship and Science


 USDA Forest Service
 Director, Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers


 Bureau of Land Management
 Assistant Director, National Landscape
 Conservation System


 USDA Forest Service
 Associate Deputy Chief, Research and
 Development


 U.S. Geological Survey
 Associate Director for Ecosystems

Date of last signature: 12/23/2015