FEMC Regional Project: Impacts of Recreation to Forest Health

Recreation Monitoring Working Group Opportunity - 2023

Project Background

Forest-based recreation activities are increasing with more people taking part in both motorized and non-motorized activities. Different types of recreation activities place varying levels and types of pressure on forests. These pressures can be concentrated (e.g., mountain bike trails) or diffuse (e.g., cutting for ski glades), with potential impacts on forest hydrology, soils, invasive species propagation, wildlife movement, tree regeneration and health. Monitoring and analysis of forest health impacts by recreational activities in the Northeast is limited, but of rising interest to land managers.

Project Objectives

The overall purpose of this project is to assess connections between recreation and forest health, and to identify monitoring efforts that are being conducted or could be conducted to capture these
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n 2024.

Working Group Objective

The Recreation Monitoring Working Group will consist of 5-7 individuals who have interest and expertise in monitoring and managing land for recreation. A variety of types of monitoring methods will be considered that capture how recreation impacts forest health. A data census among working group members or their network

Working Group Outputs

The Working Group will conduct a review of monitoring methods to identify and implement pilot monitoring at field locations. The monitoring results will be shared back to the FEMC for inclusion in the development of a monitoring recommendations document. The monitoring data will also be gathered in a data census, along with any other available data, to begin developing a data resource.

FEMC may have some resources to support pilot programs in the implementation of monitoring methods, but will be dependent on timing and other needs.

The Working Group will review final products to ensure they meet the Working Group recommendations and provide an accurate analysis of the results.