



# OUTDOOR RECREATION PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

## INTRODUCTION

The Outdoor Recreation Professional Competency Framework (ORPCF) is the new 'Standard for Excellence' for defining the scope of skills needed to plan and manage outdoor recreation. The purpose of the framework is to identify a set of core competencies for people who plan, manage, and provide outdoor recreation as a public service. This will ensure consistency across current and future training, professional development, degree program, and certification providers, and will provide a path to employment in the outdoor recreation public sector workforce. The ORPCF provides a consistent roadmap for career advancement and workforce modernization. It is a helpful tool for agencies/organizations to build an adaptable and proficient workforce, and for professionals to assess their skills and chart a path toward a well-rounded career.

The ORPCF graphic (figure 1) also identifies areas of recreation-adjacent expertise. These topics are best addressed by professionals experienced in those particular fields. They are included in the ORPCF to acknowledge that outdoor recreation professionals' work benefits from understanding these adjacent topics, how they impact and/or integrate with recreation systems, and when to defer to subject matter experts for information and decision-making support.

### Key Points:

- Outdoor recreation is a complex, interdisciplinary field that now has the professional standards necessary for consistent performance and clear career paths.
- The ORPCF equips professionals with the new and evolving skills needed for future recreation planning and management.
- No one person is expected to possess every competency.
- The ORPCF is a practical tool for self-assessment, training advocacy, and career growth (empowerment, not compliance).

## DEFINITIONS

### Outdoor Recreation Professional

Individuals who plan, manage, and provide outdoor recreation as a public service.

### Competency

The "essential skills, knowledge, abilities, and personal characteristics needed for effective job performance" (Hurd, 2005, p. 46).

### Skill

An ability to do an activity well, especially because you have practiced it.

### Proficiency

Scaled indicators of expertise.



This framework was developed in partnership with the USFS.



## OUTDOOR RECREATION PROFESSIONAL

# COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

These competencies, grouped into buckets, are important skills for outdoor recreation managers and planners across the recreation workforce for the benefit of all programs, services, and activities.

| LAND MANAGEMENT                               | RECREATION ACCESS               | PROJECT MANAGEMENT          | RECREATION MANAGEMENT                          | RECREATION PLANNING + VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT | PROGRAM + OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT | SPECIALIZED SKILLS                   |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Historical Context of Public Lands Management | Accessibility Laws + Principles | Budgeting + Milestones      | Conflict Resolution + Consensus Building       | Community Context                            | Business Acumen                 | Contract Administration + Management |
| Interdisciplinary Collaboration               | Information Access              | Facilitation                | Customer Service                               | Desired Conditions / Visioning               | Management Intent               | Human Dimensions Tools + Data        |
| Land Management Jurisdiction + Policy         | Physical Access                 | Implementation + Monitoring | Information Gathering + Management Application | Indicators + Monitoring                      | Operations and Maintenance      | Grants + Agreements                  |
| Public Lands Law                              | Socioeconomic Access            | Outreach + Public Input     | Leadership                                     | Management Strategies                        | Program Assessment              | Site Design                          |
| Shared Stewardship                            | Welcoming + Belonging           | Technical Writing           | Professional Development                       | Scenery/Visual Resources                     | Safety + Risk Management        | Special Uses + Permits               |
| Tribal + Indigenous Relations                 |                                 |                             | Public Speaking / Presenting                   | Site-Specific Policy                         |                                 |                                      |
|   |                                 |                             |  | Visitor Preferences                          |                                 |                                      |

### RECREATION-ADJACENT EXPERTISE

These topics, though relevant to recreation professionals, are specific fields of expertise that should be addressed and supported by trained professionals. Recreation professions should understand these topics, how they impact recreation systems, and when to defer to experts for information and decision-making support.

- Ecology/Recreation Ecology
- Engineering
- Historic/Cultural Management
- Interpretation + Education
- Landscape Architecture
- Personnel Management
- Social Science
- Tribal Relations
- Water Resource Management
- Wildlife Management



## OUTDOOR RECREATION PROFESSIONAL

# COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK PROFICIENCIES

### PROFICIENCY LEVEL DEFINITIONS

#### Entry Level

Actively learning this skill, occasionally working on this skill, and/or needs supervision to complete work in this skill.

#### Full-Performance Level

Formal education or training, can accomplish this skill without direct supervision, and can oversee entry level work in this skill.

#### Expert Level

Extensive experience implementing this skill, is able to train others in this skill, and can produce the high-quality outcomes associated with this skill.

### Land Management Competencies

- Historical Context of Public Land Management
- Interdisciplinary Collaboration
- Land Management Jurisdiction + Policy
- Public Lands Law
- Shared Stewardship
- Tribal + Indigenous Relations

### Recreation Access Competencies

- Accessibility Laws and Principles
- Information Access
- Physical Access
- Socioeconomic Access
- Welcoming + Belonging

### Project Management Competencies

- Budgeting + Milestones
- Facilitation
- Implementation + Monitoring
- Outreach + Public Input
- Technical Writing

### Recreation Management Competencies

- Conflict Resolution + Consensus Building
- Customer Service
- Information Gathering + Management Application
- Leadership
- Professional Development
- Public Speaking/Presenting



## Recreation Planning + Visitor Use Management

- Community Context
- Desired Conditions/Visioning
- Indicators + Monitoring
- Management Strategies
- Scenery/Visual Resources
- Site-Specific Policy
- Visitor Preferences

## Program + Operations Management Competencies

- Business Acumen
- Management Intent
- Operations and Maintenance
- Program Assessment
- Safety + Risk Management

## Specialized Skills

- Contract Administration + Management
- Human Dimensions Tools + Data
- Grants + Agreements
- Site Design
- Special Uses + Permits

## LAND MANAGEMENT

| CORE COMPETENCY  | ENTRY LEVEL   | FULL-PERFORMANCE LEVEL  | EXPERT LEVEL   |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>1 Historical Context of Public Lands Management:</b> Understand the historical formation and ethics of public land management, modern land management objectives, and evolution of access to recreation on public lands.</p> | <p>Describe the history of public land management including laws and policies that shape recreation access and management</p>   | <p>Incorporate land management ethics and modern land management objectives in recreation planning and management. Identify and apply strategies to enhance recreation access.</p>  | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on historical land management policy to influence recreation access.</p>  |
| <p><b>2 Interdisciplinary Collaboration:</b> Cultivate and leverage the value that multiple disciplines, across areas of expertise and interest, bring to recreation planning and management.</p>                                  | <p>Describe natural and cultural resource management concepts relevant to your organization. Recognize the roles and perspectives of resource specialists relevant to recreation planning and management.</p> | <p>Coordinate and collaborate with specialists from multiple disciplines to achieve common goals.</p>   | <p>Lead and coordinate teams to complete a plan or project. Ensure all relevant disciplines and perspectives are included, valued, and addressed throughout the process.</p>   |
| <p><b>3 Land Management Jurisdiction + Policy:</b> Demonstrate knowledge of the missions, policies, laws, and processes of land management agencies and jurisdictions.</p>   | <p>Explain the mission and guiding principles of your organization and those of adjacent jurisdictions.</p>   | <p>Apply your organization’s missions, policies, and jurisdictional responsibilities to planning efforts. Participate in coordination efforts for recreation management beyond your organization’s boundaries.</p>              | <p>Lead coordination efforts and identify shared goals and outcomes for recreation and resource management. Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on coordination with adjacent or nearby jurisdictions.</p>   |
| <p><b>4 Public Lands Law:</b> Apply and support compliance with applicable laws to recreation infrastructure, access, programs, information, and operations.</p>   | <p>Identify and understand local, state, and federal laws and policies applicable to recreation management in your organization.</p>  | <p>Align recreation planning and management in your organization with applicable local, state, and federal laws and policies. Coordinate with other specialists to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and policies.</p> | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations on implementation of laws and policies applicable to recreation management in your organization. Collaborate with specialists and decision makers to ensure consistent implementation and precedence. When necessary, consult with legal counsel to address conflicting regulations.</p> |

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| 5 | <p><b>Shared Stewardship:</b><br/>Collaboratively manage and plan recreation with agencies, Tribes, organizations, and the public so that multiple interests and needs are met.</p>   | <p>Understand partner organizations' missions and alignment of goals for recreation management.</p> | <p>Effectively support collaborative goals for recreation and resource management among agencies, partners, and communities. Incorporate shared goals into planning, management, and implementation plans and programs.</p> | <p>Lead collaborative efforts with agencies, communities, and partners. Prioritize, embrace, and develop stewardship approaches that advance multiple goals for public benefit and ecosystem conservation.</p> |
| 6 | <p><b>Tribal + Indigenous Relations:</b><br/>Understand the unique legal relationships between Tribes and state and federal governments, including treaty rights, Tribal sovereignty, and the federal trust responsibility. Respect/Honor and incorporate the unique perspectives Tribal communities have around landscapes and indigenous land management.</p> | <p>Identify treaty rights relevant to the lands your organization manages.</p>                      | <p>Incorporate treaty rights into recreation planning and management. Coordinate with tribal specialists to ensure compliance with all applicable treaty rights.</p>  | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on treaty rights. Identify policies to ensure appropriate consideration of treaty rights in recreation planning and management.</p>           |

## RECREATION ACCESS

| CORE COMPETENCY   | ENTRY LEVEL   | FULL-PERFORMANCE LEVEL  | EXPERT LEVEL  |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p><b>7 Accessibility Laws + Principles:</b> Understand and apply accessibility laws within recreation program management. Support compliance with applicable legal standards and principles such as independence, integration and equal opportunity.</p> | <p>Understand accessibility laws, guidelines and operational practices relevant to recreation management.</p> | <p>Integrate accessibility requirements and organizational policies into recreation planning and management. Ensure recreation operations align with accessibility laws and principles.</p>   | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on accessibility laws and policies. Identify policies for planning and management to improve all forms of accessibility in outdoor recreation spaces. Identify best practices for operations based on accessibility laws and principles.</p> |
| <p><b>8 Information Access:</b> Provide information and education that supports users' ability to recreate outdoors. Information is accurate, relevant, easily understandable, and provided through multiple accessible formats and languages.</p>        | <p>Describe the existing information and education approaches your organization uses.</p>                     | <p>Provide accurate and relevant information and education to different user groups. Identify new opportunities and technologies to facilitate access to information and education.</p>   | <p>Engage a broad set of affected parties/communities through multiple communications strategies to further community understanding and support for recreation planning and management. Understand and implement best practices for universal information access.</p>   |
| <p><b>9 Physical Access:</b> Understand and apply universal design principles and management of physical spaces to ensure that individuals of all abilities can safely engage in outdoor recreation.</p>  | <p>Understand design and management principles to best support safe and welcoming physical access.</p>        | <p>Apply universal design principles into recreation planning and management. Identify strategies to improve accessibility in physical spaces and create safe and welcoming outdoor spaces for people of all abilities. Seek to understand the needs of different user groups for safe physical access.</p> | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on physical accessibility. Conduct research and/or identify policies in planning and management to identify and address barriers to recreation facilities and opportunities.</p>   |

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| 10 | <p><b>Socioeconomic Access:</b> Identify and implement strategies to support users' ability to recreate outdoors regardless of socioeconomic status.</p>                       | <p>Identify the socioeconomic profiles of current and potential recreation users. Understand barriers to accessing outdoor recreation related to socioeconomic status.</p> | <p>Identify and implement strategies to remove or reduce barriers related to socioeconomic status. Work with partners to implement strategies that improve socioeconomic access.</p> | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on socioeconomic access. Apply existing research, and/or identify policies in planning and management to identify and address barriers to socioeconomic access.</p>  |
| 11 | <p><b>Welcoming + Belonging:</b> Foster an environment where all people feel safe, can be authentic, and have shared trust and respect for cultural and social identities.</p> | <p>Describe cultural and social identities of current and potential recreation users for your organization or unit.</p>  | <p>Identify and apply strategies to provide and foster safe and welcoming outdoor spaces for people of different cultural and social identities.</p>                                 | <p>Lead efforts with agencies, communities, and partners to identify needs for safety, access, and belonging among varying current and potential recreation users. Conduct research and/or identify policies in planning and management to create and provide safe and welcoming outdoor spaces for people of different cultural and social identities.</p> |

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

| CORE COMPETENCY   | ENTRY LEVEL   | FULL-PERFORMANCE LEVEL   | EXPERT LEVEL  |
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| <p><b>12 Budgeting + Milestones:</b><br/>Develop and implement project management plans and budgets that communicate milestones and are clear, effective, and are flexible to emerging needs and opportunities.</p> | <p>Understand project budget, milestones, and funding sources. Track project time and costs. Provide timely updates on progress and potential delays.</p>         | <p>Develop and execute a project management plan that includes estimated costs and milestones. Communicate project budget and milestones to employees, specialists, contractors, and decision-makers. Track project costs including staff time, contract expenditures, supplies and equipment.</p>   | <p>Provide oversight and guidance for a portfolio of projects, ensuring coordination of milestones and resources among staff, partners, and contractors.</p> <p>Direct long-term funding strategies, evaluate contractor proposals, track, record, and report on accomplishments, and conduct other project management tasks.</p>     |
| <p><b>13 Facilitation:</b> Structure and guide projects in a way that promotes shared learning, collaboration, and meaningful outcomes.</p>   | <p>Identify facilitation processes and tools to achieve stated objectives of a meeting or process. Support the development of facilitation agendas and plans.</p> | <p>Plan, design, and lead engaging and productive sessions (e.g., meetings, work groups, workshops) with affected parties/communities, Tribes, partners, and/or staff. Lead the development of facilitation agendas or plans. Use facilitation tools and techniques that cater to the group's needs.</p>   | <p>Plan and lead complex sessions (e.g., multi-day events, multi-jurisdictional gatherings) with diverse audiences. Use advanced skills such as active listening, reflection, inquiry, and guided group process to foster inclusive, safe, and productive gatherings that achieve meaningful outcomes.</p>                            |
| <p><b>14 Implementation + Monitoring:</b><br/>Maintain project momentum, meet identified goals, and support compliance with applicable laws, policies, and guidance.</p>  | <p>Explain project goals and compliance requirements. Assist with inspections, monitoring, and project implementation.</p>  | <p>Identify and communicate project implementation requirements including any environmental or cultural resource review, applicable permits, and monitoring requirements. Coordinate with specialists and local, county, state and federal agencies to ensure compliance with laws, policies, and guidance. Conduct regular status checks to ensure goals and timelines are met.</p> | <p>Integrate knowledge of applicable laws, policies, and guidance into project planning and implementation to support a systems approach.</p> <p>Identify and anticipate risks to natural and cultural resources, visitor experiences, and public health and safety and collect additional data or resource surveys if necessary.</p> |

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| 15 | <p><b>Outreach + Public Input:</b> Foster collaboration among interested parties with meaningful opportunities to be informed, share input, provide feedback, collaborate, partner, and share leadership on recreation projects.</p> | <p>Describe the unit or project's public outreach strategy and assist with engagement efforts. Conduct regular status checks to ensure goals and timelines are met.</p> | <p>Develop outreach and public engagement strategies in collaboration with public affairs and communication staff. Engage with affected parties/communities, users, and nearby communities. Communicate project purpose clearly, describe how feedback is used, and identify opportunities for leadership to engage directly.</p> | <p>Lead and model authentic approaches for meaningful collaboration with a variety of affected parties/communities. Incorporate feedback into planning and decision-making and develop shared leadership for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.</p> |
| 16 | <p><b>Technical Writing:</b> Convey complex written information simply and clearly to key audiences.</p>   | <p>Describe project purpose and goals and use succinct and effective language to convey them to specialists, partners, and stakeholders.</p>                            | <p>Develop and design technical documents, presentation materials, and other communication tools to convey complex recreation management goals, desired conditions, technical procedures, science, and strategies used in planning and decision-making.</p>   | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on conveying complex written information using plain language, visuals, and data. Train people in how to effectively convey complex and technical information.</p>                          |

## RECREATION MANAGEMENT

| CORE COMPETENCY   | ENTRY LEVEL  | FULL-PERFORMANCE LEVEL   | EXPERT LEVEL  |
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| <p><b>17 Conflict Resolution + Consensus Building:</b> Foster collaborative solutions among multiple parties to understand competing interests and achieve shared objectives for recreation management.</p> | <p>Identify conflict resolution and consensus building processes and tools and when they should be used to support management outcomes. Recognize when there may be conflicts, and work to address or know when to contact a supervisor for awareness.</p> | <p>Plan, convene, and participate in conflict resolution and consensus building processes with multiple parties, including pre-process work (such as situational assessments) and post-process outcomes (such as documented agreements). When appropriate, work with facilitation professionals and a variety of tools to develop and support these processes.</p> | <p>Lead sessions with multiple parties that have conflicting or competing interests, productively work through their differences and build consensus. Help parties identify shared interests and find innovative solutions to problems. Identify the need for additional tools such as mediation or arbitration when consensus cannot be reached.</p>   |
| <p><b>18 Customer Service:</b> Provide support to customers, partners, and others involved in recreation and recreation management and planning.</p>  | <p>Effectively communicate with and respond to requests from visitors, partners, user groups, and members of the public, focusing on creating great customer experience.</p>   | <p>Identify different customer segments and their needs for information, resources, and support. Communicate with customers in a timely manner with accurate and reliable information related to their needs.</p>  | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on customer service policies, practices, and resources. Train people in how to effectively communicate with visitors, partners, user groups, and members of the public.</p>  |
| <p><b>19 Information Gathering + Management Application:</b> Identify, interpret, and apply reliable and relevant information, research, and input to inform management decisions.</p>                      | <p>Describe information collection systems and use established methods for extracting and conducting basic analysis of biophysical, social-cultural and visitor information/data.</p>  | <p>Plan, manage, and analyze information collection systems for recreation programs. Determine management questions and needs (e.g., assessment, inventory, monitoring, trends) and the appropriate methods to gather information in a reliable and transparent manner. Analyze information to inform management decisions.</p>                                    | <p>Provide oversight and guidance for collecting and managing relevant data that impacts recreation programs to improve management effectiveness. Interpret and disseminate relevant research to improve information gathering methods and analysis. Develop and/or improve upon data sampling, collection, generation, analysis, and reporting protocols to meet project and agency needs.</p> |

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| 20 | <p><b>Leadership:</b> Inspire and guide individuals and teams to collaboratively achieve goals and address challenges.</p>  | <p>Explain and understand the different leadership styles, including your own.</p>   | <p>Identify and use the appropriate leadership style for different situations. Demonstrate an understanding of your sphere of influence and the ability to act within it to influence decision-making and support effective recreation management.</p>                       | <p>Use multiple relational skills such as communication, facilitation, consensus building, conflict resolution, and problem-solving to navigate complex group dynamics and gain trust, buy-in, and support among staff, partners, stakeholders, and other constituents. Understand and demonstrate the difference between leadership and management.</p> |
| 21 | <p><b>Professional Development:</b> Develop and enhance skills through training and education opportunities to effectively manage recreation in dynamic environments.</p>   | <p>Recognize core competencies for outdoor recreation planning and management and identify skill development opportunities for yourself.</p> | <p>Identify knowledge and skill gaps to enhance your recreation planning and management competencies. Actively seek out professional development opportunities. Support subordinates in gaining new skills for their current or future professional growth.</p>              | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on recreation planning and management core competencies and professional development. Train people in one or more recreation planning and management core competencies.</p>   |
| 22 | <p><b>Public Speaking/Presenting:</b> Use verbal, visual and graphic tools to effectively communicate ideas, insights, and recommendations to build support for recreation management and create space for productive dialogue.</p> | <p>Effectively communicate with co-workers, partners, and the public using a variety of tools and methods.</p>                               | <p>Communicate elements of recreation management (e.g. desired conditions, goals, technical details) to decision-makers, partners, communities, and others. Present data and recommendations effectively and respectfully. Anticipate and respond to additional inquiry.</p> | <p>Develop and deliver engaging and compelling presentations related to your subject matter expertise using formats and tools appropriate for the audience. Use techniques that foster curiosity, shared learning, dialogue, and innovation.</p>   |

## RECREATION PLANNING + VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT

| CORE COMPETENCY  | ENTRY LEVEL   | FULL-PERFORMANCE LEVEL   | EXPERT LEVEL   |
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| <p><b>23 Community Context:</b> Understand the unique characteristics and trends of a community to develop and enhance relevant recreation access, opportunities and associated benefits.</p>  | <p>Identify and evaluate trend and community data for a specific project or planning area.</p>  | <p>Collect community data from multiple sources, assess its importance and relevance, and make conclusions and recommendations related to recreation access, opportunities, and benefits for the project or planning area.</p>   | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on community context information collection and analysis approaches. Interpret and disseminate relevant research to ensure planners and managers have access to relevant information. Conduct research and/or identify policies to enhance recreation access, opportunities, and benefits.</p>  |
| <p><b>24 Desired Conditions/Visioning:</b> Articulate a clear and inspiring future vision, through outlining desired conditions, that aligns interested parties toward achieving meaningful outcomes for visitor experiences and natural and cultural resources.</p> | <p>Explain the purpose and elements of visioning and desired conditions statements. Understand the goals and objectives related to recreation in your organization’s guiding documents. Support the development of vision and desired conditions statements using existing resources.</p> | <p>Assess alignment and support for future-focused recreation management by gathering input from specialists, partners, stakeholders, and others. Use input and supporting documentation (e.g., management plans, enabling legislation, state or county policies) to develop and gain buy-in for vision and desired conditions statements.</p> | <p>Model and lead efforts on complex projects with multiple affected parties/communities to identify shared values for visitor experiences, natural and cultural resource conditions, health and safety, access, belonging and other elements of visitor use management. Provide guidance and recommendations on developing and gaining buy-in for vision and desired conditions statements.</p>   |
| <p><b>25 Indicators + Monitoring:</b> Establish and review measurable benchmarks to assess desired conditions for visitor experience and resource conditions.</p>  | <p>Describe relevant indicators for recreation management in your organization or project area. Identify appropriate monitoring techniques for common indicators.</p>   | <p>Identify and evaluate the effectiveness of indicators related to specific desired conditions for visitor experiences and/or natural and cultural resources. Develop monitoring protocols for assessing selected indicators and collaborate with staff, partners, and volunteers to implement the monitoring program.</p>                    | <p>Provide oversight and guidance for establishing indicators and managing monitoring programs related to visitor use management and desired conditions. Identify gaps in monitoring data and design efficient data collection protocols to assess changes over time. Provide guidance and recommendations for when to adjust management strategies and actions based on monitoring because desired conditions are not being achieved.</p> |

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| 26 | <p><b>Management Strategies:</b> Identify approaches for managing recreation to achieve or maintain desired conditions.</p>  | <p>Understand common management strategies used in your organization or project area and why those strategies are employed. Identify how management strategies inform day-to-day roles and responsibilities.</p> | <p>Identify and implement appropriate management strategies to achieve or maintain desired conditions. Collaboratively assess and evaluate various management strategies to ensure their effectiveness for moving toward stated outcomes. Document changes in management strategies to provide transparency and accountability.</p> | <p>Provide oversight and guidance for identifying and selecting management strategies related to visitor use management and desired conditions. Facilitate collaborative approaches to ensure appropriate management strategies are selected. Make recommendations on adjusting management strategies based on monitoring and evaluation. Identify implications that management strategies may have within the larger organization or community</p> |
| 27 | <p><b>Scenery/Visual Resources:</b> Understand the aesthetic and experiential qualities of landscapes and integrate the values of these qualities into planning efforts to create and design environments that foster connection, enjoyment, and a sense of place.</p> | <p>Describe the scenic resources and aesthetic qualities for your unit or project area. Understand the contribution of scenery to the recreation experience.</p>   | <p>Identify landscape and setting characteristics that are important to enhance and protect. Develop management and design approaches to foster connection, enjoyment, and sense of place in outdoor recreation settings.</p>   | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on scenery and visual resource management. Train people in how to assess landscape and setting characteristics. Review and approve site design plans to ensure integration with desired conditions and requirements and best practices for accessibility.</p>  |
| 28 | <p><b>Site-Specific Policy:</b> Understand a project area's specific guidelines and regulations to inform planning components and incorporate guidelines and regulations into plans to ensure compliance.</p>  | <p>Review and understand your organization's regulations, policies, and guidance related to the project area.</p>  | <p>Interpret and incorporate relevant laws, statutes, regulations, policies, and guidance into recreation plans. Ensure policies are understood by planning team members, partners, and stakeholders and used to develop the project purpose and constraints.</p>   | <p>Provide oversight and recommendations within your organization on regulations, policies and guidance relevant to the planning/project area.</p>  |

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| <p><b>29 Visitor Preferences:</b> Identify and plan for recreation opportunities and benefits for visitors' varying attitudes, beliefs, and values, and ability to be flexible with these differences.</p> | <p>Identify and evaluate recreation opportunities and benefits for a specific project or planning area.</p> | <p>Identify and assess visitor preferences through various methods and sources (e.g., surveys, focus groups, existing reports, interviews with front line staff). Make recommendations about the types of recreation opportunities to provide in the context of current and projected demand in the region.</p> | <p>Provide guidance and recommendations within your organization on visitor preference information collection and analysis approaches. Interpret and disseminate research to ensure planners and managers have access to relevant information. Conduct research and/or identify policies to ensure recreation opportunities address user demand, stewardship, and economic benefits in the region.</p> |
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## PROGRAM + OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

| CORE COMPETENCY  | ENTRY LEVEL   | FULL-PERFORMANCE LEVEL   | EXPERT LEVEL  |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p><b>30 Business Acumen:</b> Understand administrative practices and leverage grants and other funding sources to support program development and delivery and meet current and future program goals.</p>                 | <p>Describe different funding sources and partnerships for recreation program planning, management, operations, and maintenance.</p>                | <p>Coordinate with partners, permit holders, concessionaires, and communities and participate in developing a recreation business plan. Identify the best suited to lead management activities and secure funding.</p>   | <p>Identify and model a shared stewardship approach to recreation program management. Build and maintain relationships based on mutual goals for visitor experiences and resource management. Develop a multi-year programmatic approach to funding in collaboration with partners.</p> |
| <p><b>31 Management Intent:</b> Determine and communicate direction for recreation infrastructure management based on law and policy, site design standards, and desired conditions.</p>                                   | <p>Identify applicable laws and policies, site design standards, and desired conditions or goals for the recreation site, activity, or project.</p> | <p>Understand and use management intent in planning, project management, and operations. Convey management intent to staff, partners, volunteers, and users.</p>   | <p>Define management intent based on laws and policies, site design standards, and desired conditions.</p> <p>Facilitate the shared understanding of management intent among decision-makers, staff, partners, and the community.</p>   |
| <p><b>32 Operations + Maintenance:</b> Develop and implement comprehensive operational plans that address health and safety requirements, annual and cyclical maintenance, and minimum and recommended staffing needs.</p> | <p>Understand and assist with implementing the elements of an operations and maintenance plans, policies, and procedures.</p>                       | <p>Create an operations and maintenance plan for a recreation site or complex. Include operations schedule, priority maintenance needs, health and safety requirements, and strategies for financial sustainability.</p> | <p>Lead development of programmatic or unit-wide operations and maintenance standards that address maintenance schedules, recreation infrastructure resilience to disasters and climate change, and risk management protocols for public and employee health and safety.</p>            |

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| 33 | <b>Program Assessment:</b> Use recreation assessment and monitoring programs and projects to maintain and improve recreation assets.  | Identify basic methods and tools used to assess recreation programs and projects. Recognize the purpose of monitoring and how assessment data informs planning and management decisions. | Collect, organize, and summarize program assessment data using appropriate tools and methods. Apply findings to recommend operational or planning adjustments.  | Design, lead, or evaluate assessment and monitoring programs. Interpret trends, analyze complex datasets, and integrate findings into long-range planning or program improvement strategies. Communicate results to leadership, partners, and the public. |
| 34 | <b>Safety + Risk Management:</b> Apply workplace safety procedures at recreation sites and for activities for employees, users, partners, volunteers, and others who interact with the recreation site or area. | Recognize site and environmental safety precautions, situational awareness, and incident preparedness. Correctly use personal protective equipment (PPE).                                | Identify, implement, and regularly update risk management plans for recreation sites and activities. Communicate risks and safety requirements to staff, partners, and volunteers and ensure compliance. Plan and coordinate safety and risk management training for staff. | Develop and manage a recreation program that incorporates best practices for employee, user, partner, and volunteer safety and risk management; coordinate with others to identify and address environmental, health, and personal safety concerns.       |

## SPECIALIZED SKILLS

| CORE COMPETENCY  | ENTRY LEVEL  | FULL-PERFORMANCE LEVEL   | EXPERT LEVEL   |
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| <p><b>35 Contract Administration + Management:</b> Provide management of recreation-related contracts as well as oversight of contractor activities, deliverables, deadlines, and payments.</p>        | <p>Recognize contract requirements including the scope of work, budget, and timeline. Document contractor activities as directed by supervisor or contract administrator.</p>  | <p>Identify contract requirements, standards, and/or products in collaboration with certified contracting officer. Serve as a contracting officer's representative (COR).</p> <p>Implement the plan to monitor project progress including quality and quantity of work product per the contracted scope.</p> | <p>Develop contract solicitation documents and process with technical specialists, including the project scope, specifications, implementation schedule, evaluation criteria, and other required contract elements. Evaluate the submitted documentation using the criteria to select and contract with the selected contractor. Create a plan to monitor progress in the field, invoices and payments, and reports per the contracted scope and timeline.</p> |
| <p><b>36 Human Dimensions Tools + Data:</b> Use social science methods and findings to address the behaviors, desires, values, and beliefs of diverse user groups in planning and decision-making.</p> | <p>Demonstrate understanding of human dimensions concepts and the role of social science in outdoor recreation planning and management. Assist with data collection, documentation, and interpretation of findings related to visitor behaviors and experiences.</p> | <p>Collect, organize, and summarize social science findings using appropriate tools and methods. Apply findings to make recreation management recommendations or decisions related to access, operations, visitor behavior, stewardship for the project or planning area.</p>                                | <p>Design and administer social science data collection and analysis programs. Identify appropriate social science methodologies to address emerging issues, contested values, and the full range of stakeholder perspectives. Interpret and synthesize findings across multiple data sources to ensure planners and managers have access to relevant information.</p>   |

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| 37 | <b>Grants + Agreements:</b> Seek, execute, and track grants and partner agreements.   | Recognize the elements of a grant proposal or a partner agreement including outcomes and specific tasks or requirements. Understand types of agreements and when they are applicable.  | Identify partners and funding sources for recreation projects including shared goals, roles and responsibilities, and distribution of duties. Implement transparent and timely project reporting, financial tracking, and communications.   | Lead a multi-year, multi-project grants and agreements program including prioritization and integration of recreation projects. Build relationships and communicate with multiple partners, both existing and potential.  |
| 38 | <b>Site Design:</b> Create functional, aesthetically pleasing, and sustainable layouts that enhance user experiences while maintaining natural, cultural, and environmental attributes and character. | Demonstrate foundational knowledge of recreation site design principles and their relationship to visitor experience, accessibility, safety, and resource protection.  | Apply site design principles to plan, develop, or improve recreation sites. Conduct site assessments, interpret design standards, and integrate accessibility, sustainability, and resource protection requirements into cohesive layouts. Develop the skills and understanding to work with design professionals (landscape architects and engineers.)                         | Provide guidance and recommendations in site design across programs, landscapes, or jurisdictions. Develop design concepts and guidance that reinforce sense of place, cultural context, and long-term stewardship objectives. Mentor others, share best practices, and contribute to organizational learning by shaping standards, training, and policy interpretation related to recreation site design.            |
| 39 | <b>Special Uses + Permits:</b> Apply knowledge of uses that require permits and other approval on public lands to develop, issue, and monitor permits and other necessary approvals.                  | Demonstrate knowledge of special uses authorities and the types of activities that require permits or other approvals. Assist with processing permit applications, maintaining case files, and monitoring permit operations. | Administer special use permits including proposal/prospectus development and evaluation, permit compliance, and coordination with interdisciplinary teams to identify resource concerns, mitigation measures, and permit conditions. Communicate effectively with permit holders and partners to support safe, authorized, and sustainable use of National Forest System lands. | Provide guidance and recommendations for special uses administration within a unit or across multiple program areas. Interpret and apply policy to complex, high-risk, or controversial proposals and permit actions. Mentor permit administrators and line officers, support consistent decision-making, and strengthen partnerships while ensuring protection of National Forest System lands and public interests. |