



## VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY

# White Mountain National Forest

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Cross-jurisdictional collaboration to manage visitation
- 2 hour, bi-monthly meetings
- “Implement, monitor, evaluate, and adjust”

## FACTS

**88%** NH public land visitation increase, 2021

**4,000+** miles of trails across NH public land

## MORE INFORMATION

[WMNF Working Group Presentation](#)  
[2009 WMNF Land & Resource Mgmt Plan](#)

## SUMMARY

New Hampshire, the second most forested state in the U.S., saw a 40% increase in recreational visitation to the White Mountain National Forest in 2021, prompting concerns about capacity. To address this, a Visitor Use Management (VUM) working group has been formed to collaboratively manage recreational activities across the entire state. The group, comprised of federal, state, local, non-profit, and private partners, aims to harmonize social, ecological, and economic needs. Facilitated by the University of New Hampshire, the group holds bi-monthly meetings covering topics like VUM, Managed Access, Carrying Capacity, Visitor Education, and Safety. Following the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council framework, the group defines outcomes, identifies strategies, and focuses on long-term monitoring and evaluation.

## MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES

The working group, having gathered valuable insights and achieved early successes, emphasizes the importance of building a foundation for action plans, defining desired VUM directions, and identifying management strategies. Lessons include testing waters, assessing constituents' viewpoints, building trust, and avoiding hasty decisions. The group's collaborative approach emphasizes the importance of an “implement, monitor, evaluate, and adjust” framework. Partners remain engaged, silos between federal and state agencies have been dismantled, and ongoing efforts focus on enhancing capacity for a common objective.