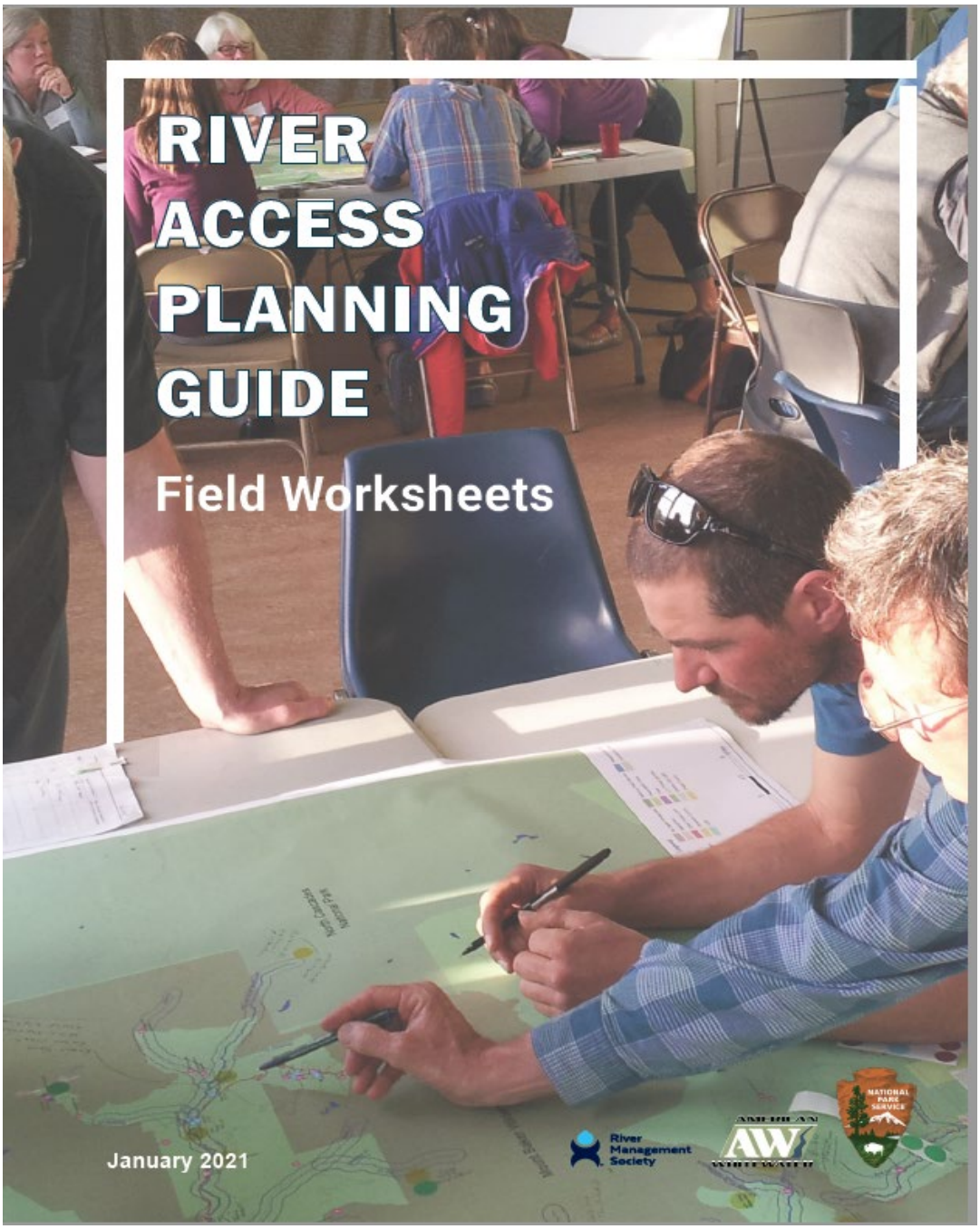


River Access Reach Analysis Worksheet

This document is one of two worksheets to be used in tandem with the **River Access Planning Guide (Feb. 2020).** It provides a high-level overview of the planning process and will give you the ability to:

- Assess current or potential river segments or reaches (lengths of river),
- Collect and review supporting documents and data, and
- Develop planning discussions with stakeholders and partners.

References next to/under section headings refer to sections and page numbers in the **River Access Planning Guide** that may be helpful for understanding the question prompts.

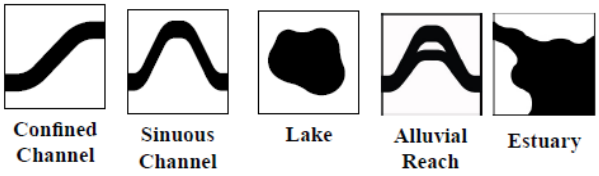
DEVELOP A REFERENCE PROFILE OF THIS REACH

River mile beginning (*USGS maps*)**:** **Latitude/longitude coordinates:**	**River mile end** (*USGS maps*)**:** **Latitude/longitude coordinates:**
Highway upstream mile marker:	**Highway downstream mile marker:**
Management:	**Land ownership:**
Associated Site Analysis Worksheets:	**Popular reference name, if applicable** (*example: Green River Narrows*):

SKETCH REACH WITH PUT-IN / TAKE-OUT LOCATIONS

A. SYSTEM AND LOCATION

RAPG Pages: 15-16



UNDERSTAND YOUR REGIONAL CONTEXT

Which system type describes this river (*example: high-gradient headwaters or within an alluvial low-gradient reach)***?**

Which major population areas will people travel from to be here *(i.e., the distance from population centers can impact use and the likelihood that a site is primarily a destination for day use vs. over night. Include mileage or travel time estimates.)***?**

DESCRIBE THE GEOMORPHOLOGY AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

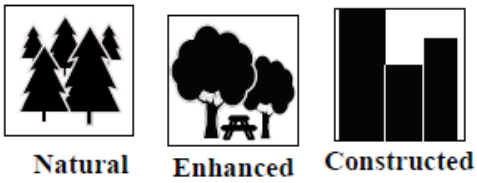
Describe the physical features of the site in relation to geology and river processes:

- Channel type characteristics:
- Bed material (*sand, gravel, cobble, boulder, and/or bedrock*):
- Gradient:
- Drainage area:
- Channel form (*branched, sinuous, confined*):
- Flow Regime (flow patterns and characteristics over time):

Compare existing use patterns with the characteristics that define the setting and hydrology along the river system *(example: the river left beach and car-camping parking lot areas become inundated during occasional high flows.)***.**

B. LANDSCAPE SETTING

RAPG Pages: 17-18



DESCRIBE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

Understand the setting of access points, their location within the river system, and how they relate to user needs.
Describe the following:

- Overall level of development (description of the resource):

- Sensitive Resources:

- Trends in Natural Resources:

LOCATE AND SKETCH NOTABLE FEATURES

IDENTIFY RECREATION FEATURES AND HAZARDS

Inventory and map river features which are attractive to users (*Example:* existing access points, *a whitewater feature and modified eddies*) **and hazards they may wish to avoid** (*Example: an unattended low head dam, bridge abutments and modified remains of mill or factory*)**:**

LOCATE AND/OR SKETCH HALLMARK CHARACTERISTICS

List existing access points *(examples: put-in / take-out and potential evacuation routes or beaches for stopping along the way which could provide respite or location for a water or land-based rescue)***:**

Describe the road network between access points, including on which side of the river an access site is located:

Identify the gaps between existing access sites *(example: 7-mile stretch between put-in at XX and take-out at XX)***:**

Identify hazards along and in the river *(examples: bridge abutments and dams)***:**

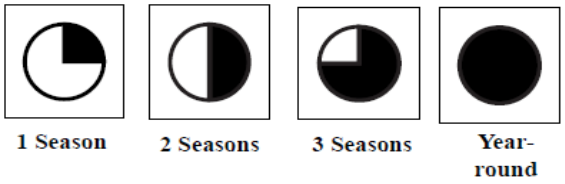
Estimate the travel time on the water between access points *(example: 2 hours between XX and XX at 2,300 cfs)***:**

Identify features that may need to be scouted or portaged *(example: to avoid a hidden strainer, possible broach or piton)***:**

Describe the characteristics of the river, including site-specific and unique features *(examples: narrow or blind drops, drops which recirculate at certain levels, shoals which are too shallow to navigate at low flows. braided, sediment-laden channels, whitewater features, eddies, rapids and viewpoints such as basalt columns, waterfalls)***:**

C. TEMPORAL DEPENDENCE

RAPG Pages: 19-20



UNDERSTAND ACTIVITY AS IT RELATES TO SEASONALITY

When during the year is this site used *(example: a site may have consistent use levels through all four seasons, or it may have sporadic use associated with weather, snow melt, seasonal rainfall, or reservoir release dates)***?**
How do seasonal patterns of weather, water flows, or regulatory policies impact the physical and biological/natural resources?

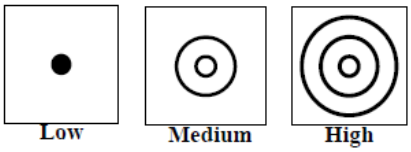
UNDERSTAND HYDROLOGIC DATA AND IMPACTS ON SEASONS OF USE

Review how dynamic changes in river flow, river channel location, and potential changes to shoreline conditions could affect access facilities.

Are access sites in the reach located in a floodplain, and how often does inundation occur?
Describe how access can be accommodated during inundation for specialized use and rescue *(example: parking nexus with river access designed so ramps and stairways extend above the 100-year FEMA flood zone)*:

D. FREQUENCY

RAPG Pages: 21-22



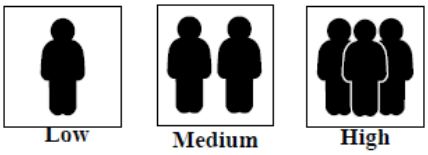
DESCRIBE WHEN AND HOW OFTEN RECREATION OCCURS

Frequency of use is distinct from the level of use a site receives. The reach could be used year-round with a light but consistent level of visitation. In other cases, the recreation activity may occur sporadically throughout the year but experience a high level of use on those days. Also, timeframes and level of use might vary among various users.

What level of use do you expect on weekdays?
What level of use do you expect on weekends?
How would you describe use trends during the past few years?

E. DENSITY

RAPG Pages: 23-24



DETERMINE THE DENSITY OR LEVEL OF USE AND SPATIAL CONSTRAINTS

Understanding how many individuals will use this reach will help determine appropriate facilities.

NOTE AND SKETCH DESIRED VISITOR USE (TYPES, PRIMARY USE, TEMPORAL DENSITY/FREQUENCY), LEVEL OF INFRASTRUCTURE (NATURAL, ENHANCED, CONSTRUCTED), AMENITIES, MANAGEMENT, AND VISUAL CHARACTER

F. USE TYPE AND CHALLENGE LEVEL

RAPG Pages: 25-26

IDENTIFY THE TOP USES AND POTENTIAL CONFLICTS

Any one site can support multiple uses depending on where it is located within the system and the temporal scale in which activities occur.

Which uses will take place in this reach?
Describe the types of craft which will be used:
List all recreational activities (*examples: rafting, kayaking, sitting along the bank, skipping rocks):*
List traditional and spiritual uses, including, but not limited to, those recognized by treaty rights. What groups are conducting these activities? Where does the use take place? *(examples: hunting and gathering, spiritual significance of a waterfall)*

IDENTIFY THE CHALLENGE LEVEL

Challenge level is a component of the recreational experience for river recreationists.

Describe the level of difficulty for the recreational experience afforded in this river section?
Which attributes and/or specific circumstances contribute to higher level of difficulty at a particular location?
Describe the level of skill required for on-river and in-river activities *(examples: swimming, experience or skills required for enjoying Class II whitewater)***:**

G. MANAGEMENT

RAPG Pages: 27-28

IDENTIFY MANAGEMENT NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

Taking into account the managers and landowners you listed on p. 1, identify resources to implement them as part of the site design process.

List Managers *(examples: federal, state, local, private, organizational, community)***:**
List the management objectives (examples: low- cost, sustainable maintenance, visitor use)**:**
List primary management challenges *(examples: protecting fisheries, land ownership)**:***

IDENTIFY RESOURCES FOR OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Understand on-going maintenance needs and resources that must be available for managers in order to offer a consistent, safe recreational environment.

Describe post-construction resources available or planned.
What partnerships are planned to support on-going management functions?
What resources are planned to monitor and assess conditions that arise?