Introduction

The US Forest Service 2012 Colorado Roadless Rule guides management of Colorado Roadless Areas on National Forest System lands. There may be misconceptions that management is not allowed or needed in roadless areas and roadless characteristics and values of Colorado Roadless Areas can be more accessible and clearly communicated to the Forest Service audience. When management direction and policy is translated in a more tangible framework, the audience may be more likely to retain the information and apply it in their day-to-day work. This approach could be applied in employee training situations to improve professional development and retention. 

Results: Final Elements of The Rundown on Roadless ArcGIS Story Map

One key aim of this ArcGIS Story Map is to dispel the misconception that forest management is not needed or allowed in roadless areas. Another aim is to encourage agency land managers and practitioners to become more acquainted with the management guidance provided by the Colorado Roadless Rule, as well as the roadless characteristics and values of Colorado Roadless Areas. Land managers and practitioners can scroll down through The Rundown on Roadless ArcGIS Story Map for an engaging and visually appealing, tailored narrative about these issues, roadless areas, and the Colorado Roadless Rule. The embedded web map applications primarily draw from existing Forest Service data but were configured specifically for this ArcGIS Story Map to present a large amount of information in a more accessible framework.

Materials and Methods

Creation of The Rundown on Roadless ArcGIS Story Map followed an iterative workflow, adapted from Esri’s Story Map Creation workflow (Esri, 2020). Embedded web map applications were created and tailored for the audience to be used as a support tool when planning roadless area management activities. The Community Protection Zones’ application shows communities at-risk to large-scale wildfires, Community Protection Zones, and Community Wildlife Protection Plan areas.

The combination of US Forest Service photos, stakeholder contributions, graphics, and interactive maps communicates big ideas and technical information in a practical framework.

Conclusion

This approach to creating The Rundown on Roadless ArcGIS Story Map demonstrated how information about the Colorado Roadless Rule can be more accessible and clearly communicated to the Forest Service audience. When management direction and policy is translated in a more tangible framework, the audience may be more likely to retain the information and apply it in their day-to-day work. This approach could be applied in employee training situations to improve professional development and retention. 

Although research shows that visual storytelling is a communication tool that can improve comprehension of material, this concept was not tested during the Capstone. Pursuing empirical, controlled studies can help explore the effectiveness of using ArcGIS Story Maps in improving comprehension of material. Agencies should continue exploring visual storytelling as a communication tool that can improve retention and comprehension of material. Information provided by The Rundown on Roadless ArcGIS Story Map can be shared to employees, particularly land managers and practitioners in Colorado.

Bibliography


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