

**You've determined the critical load: now what?
Tracking progress at Rocky Mountain National Park using
NADP data**

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Through much collaboration the National Parks Service, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Environmental Protection Agency issued the Nitrogen Deposition Reduction Plan (NDRP) in 2007 for Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP). As part of the NDRP, the agencies endorsed a critical load of 1.5 kg/ha/yr in order to protect aquatic and terrestrial resources at RMNP. To achieve this threshold, the agencies have chosen a glidepath approach which anticipates gradual improvement over time. The baseline condition at RMNP is 3.1 kg N/ha/yr. The first interim milestone requires a reduction of wet nitrogen deposition from baseline conditions to 2.7 kg N/ha/yr by the year 2012. Progress towards this and subsequent interim milestones will be assessed using the weight of evidence at 5-year intervals starting in 2013 until the critical load is achieved in the year 2032. The weight of evidence approach uses multiple types of information to determine the success or failure of the goals of the NDRP. Several analyses will be used to track nitrogen deposition at RMNP and include, but are not limited to the following: (1) assessment of progress along the glidepath, (2) long-term trend analyses for RMNP and other regional sites, and (3) short-term trend analyses for RMNP and other regional sites. These analyses and the rationale for their use will be presented along with other key challenges of monitoring in a remote high-elevation ecosystem.

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