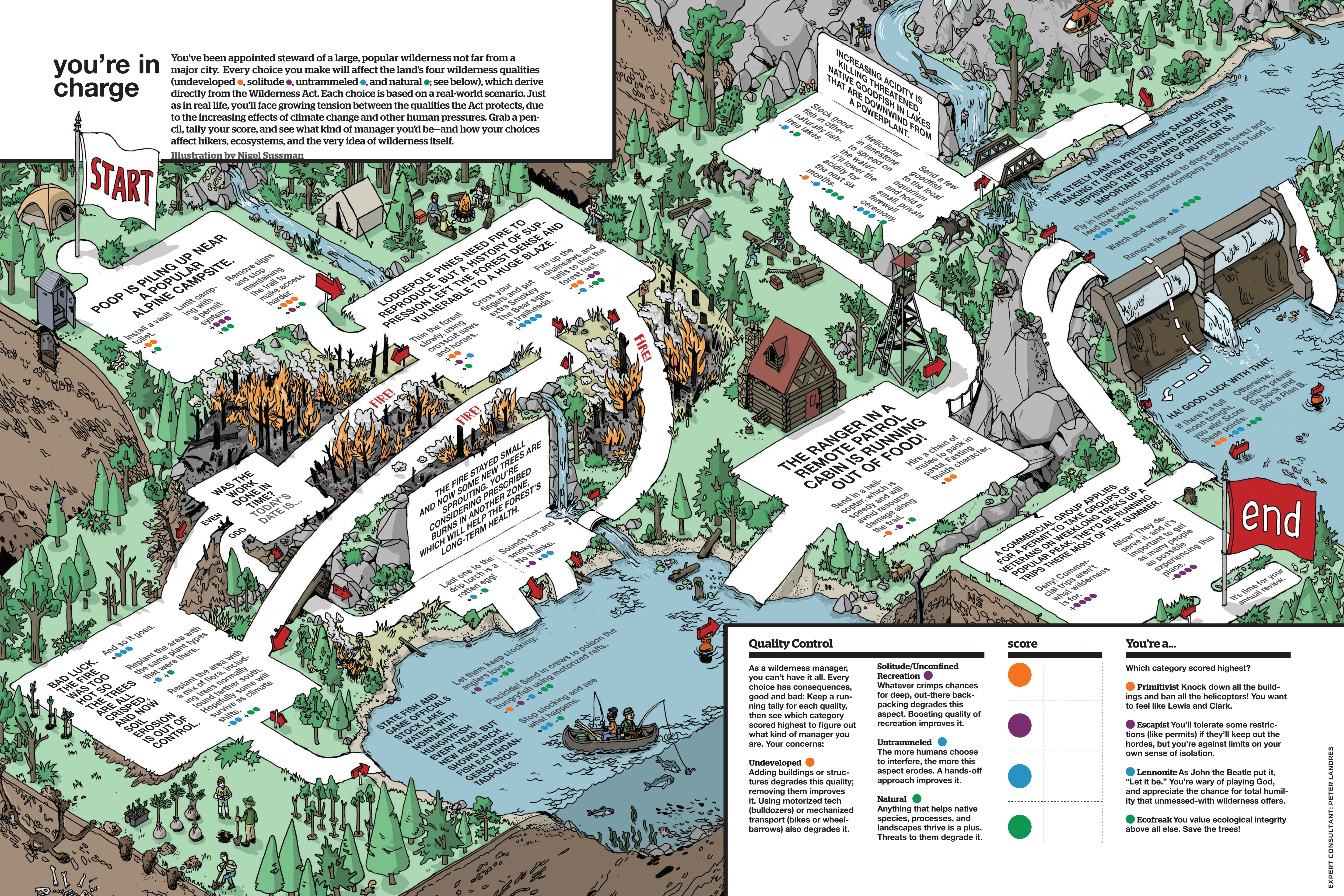


you're in charge

You've been appointed steward of a large, popular wilderness not far from a major city. Every choice you make will affect the land's four wilderness qualities (undeveloped, solitude, untrammeled, and natural), which derive directly from the Wilderness Act. Each choice is based on a real-world scenario. Just as in real life, you'll face growing tension between the qualities the Act protects, due to the increasing effects of climate change and other human pressures. Grab a pencil, tally your score, and see what kind of manager you'd be—and how your choices affect hikers, ecosystems, and the very idea of wilderness itself.

Illustration by Nigel Sussman



START

POOP IS PILING UP NEAR A POPULAR ALPINE CAMPSITE.

- Install a vault toilet. +
- Limit camping with a permit system. +
- Remove signs and stop maintaining the trail to make access harder. +

LODGEROLE PINES NEED FIRE TO REPRODUCE, BUT A HISTORY OF SUPPRESSION LEFT THE FOREST DENSE AND VULNERABLE TO A HUGE BLAZE.

- Thin the forest slowly, using crosscut saws and horses. +
- Fire up the chainsaws and helicopters to thin the forest fast. +
- Cross your fingers and put extra Smokey the Bear signs at trailheads. +

WAS THE WORK DONE IN TIME? TODAY'S DATE IS...

EVEN

ODD

THE FIRE STAYED SMALL AND NOW SOME NEW TREES ARE SPROUTING. YOU'RE CONSIDERING PRESCRIBED BURNS IN ANOTHER ZONE, WHICH WILL HELP THE FOREST'S LONG-TERM HEALTH.

- Last one to the drip torch is a rotten egg. +
- Sounds hot and smoky. No thanks. +

BAD LUCK. THE FIRE WAS TOO HOT SO THE TREES ARE ALL CRISPED, AND NOW SOIL EROSION IS OUT OF CONTROL.

- And so it goes. +
- Replant the area with the same plant types that were there. +
- Replant the area with a mix of flora, including trees normally found farther south. Hopefully some will survive as climate shifts. +

STATE FISH AND GAME OFFICIALS STOCK LAKE WATERY WITH NONNATIVE HUNGRIE FISH EVERY YEAR, BUT NEW RESEARCH SHOWS EAT-ENDANGERED FROG TADPOLES.

- Let them keep stocking; anglers love it. +
- Pesticide! Send in crews to poison the hungry fish using motorized rats. +
- Stop stocking and see what happens. +

THE RANGER IN A REMOTE PATROL CABIN IS RUNNING OUT OF FOOD!

- Send in a helicopter, which is speedy and will avoid resource damage along the trail. +
- Hire a chain of mules to pack in pasta. Fasting builds character. +

A COMMERCIAL GROUP APPLIES FOR A PERMIT TO TAKE GROUPS OF VETERANS ON WEEKLONG TREKS UP A POPULAR PEAK; THEY'D BE RUNNING TRIPS THERE MOST OF THE SUMMER.

- Deny! Commercial trips aren't what wilderness is for. +
- Allow! They deserve it, and it's important to get as many people as possible experiencing this place. +

INCREASING ACIDITY IS KILLING THREATENED, NATIVE GOODFISH IN LAKES THAT ARE DOWNWIND FROM A POWERPLANT.

- Stock good-naturally fish-free lakes. +
- Helicopter in limestone to spread on the water. It'll lower the acidity for the next six months. +
- Send a few goodfish to the local aquarium and hold a farewell ceremony. +

THE STEELY DAM IS PREVENTING SALMON FROM MAKING IT UPSTREAM TO SPAWN AND DIE, THUS DEPRIVING THE BEARS AND FOREST OF AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF NUTRIENTS.

- Fly in frozen salmon carcasses to drop on the forest and feed the bears; the power company is offering to fund it. +
- Watch and weep. +
- Remove the dam! +

HAI GOOD LUCK WITH THAT.

- If there's a full moon tonight, you win! Score these points: +
- Otherwise, politics prevail. Go back and pick a Plan B. +

end

It's time for your annual review.

Quality Control

As a wilderness manager, you can't have it all. Every choice has consequences, good and bad: Keep a running tally for each quality, then see which category scored highest to figure out what kind of manager you are. Your concerns:

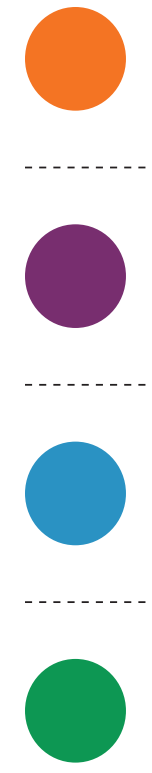
Undeveloped Adding buildings or structures degrades this quality; removing them improves it. Using motorized tech (bulldozers) or mechanized transport (bikes or wheelbarrows) also degrades it.

Solitude/Unconfined Recreation Whatever crimps chances for deep, out-there backpacking degrades this aspect. Boosting quality of recreation improves it.

Untrammeled The more humans choose to interfere, the more this aspect erodes. A hands-off approach improves it.

Natural Anything that helps native species, processes, and landscapes thrive is a plus. Threats to them degrade it.

score



You're a...

Which category scored highest?

- Primitivist** Knock down all the buildings and ban all the helicopters! You want to feel like Lewis and Clark.
- Escapist** You'll tolerate some restrictions (like permits) if they'll keep out the hordes, but you're against limits on your own sense of isolation.
- Lennonite** As John the Beatle put it, "Let it be." You're wary of playing God, and appreciate the chance for total humility that unmessed-with wilderness offers.
- Ecofreak** You value ecological integrity above all else. Save the trees!