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CHAPTER 2

Alternatives

Introduction

This section describes the range of alternatives considered, including the preferred alternative. Five alternatives were analyzed: Alternative 1 - Modified, the preferred alternative in the Final EIS; Alternative 1, the proposed action in the Revised Draft EIS; Alternative 2, emphasizing resource protection; Alternative 3, continuation of current management; and Alternative 4, emphasizing visitor freedom. Alternatives to the proposed action were developed to respond to the significant issues that are described in detail in Chapter One. The original public scoping, the work of the public involvement team, public comments to the draft, and input provided throughout the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIS) through public meetings were all considered in formulating the proposed action and other action alternatives.

Direction Common to All Action Alternatives

This section defines management guidelines for topics that are not affected by a significant issue and do not change by alternative. Additionally, some of the direction common to all alternatives outlines current direction in individual Forest Land and Resource Management Plans (Forest Plans) and will be incorporated into a new management prescription specific to this Forest Plan amendment.

Air Resources

Goals and Objectives

Prevent significant adverse effects of air pollutants and atmospheric deposition on wilderness resources, including visibility, while allowing for natural forces and processes (e.g., fire) to assume their natural role. Through cooperation with local, state and federal air regulatory agencies protect wilderness resources from adverse effects and achieve: 1) the air quality goals established in the Clean Air Act, 2) Federal and State air quality standards for Class I Airsheds.

Management Direction

Identify and inventory air quality related values. Monitor the effects of air pollution on sensitive receptors to the air quality related values.

Protect current conditions of air quality related values.

Evaluate proposed major emission sources that might adversely affect the Class I Airshed, including sources not on Federal Land.

Aircraft Overflights

Management Direction

Notify the appropriate military authority of low-level flights over wilderness until flights cease. Coordinate with the Federal Aviation Administration to update wilderness boundaries on flight charts.

Heritage Resources

Goals and Objectives

Heritage resources within the study area will be managed through programmatic measures adopted in a formal Programmatic Agreement (PA) between the State Historic Preservation Office, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Forest Service and Indian tribes. This PA, entitled Programmatic Agreement: Controlling Impacts on Historic Properties: Management of Ansel Adams, John Muir and Dinkey Lakes Wildernesses, Sierra and Inyo National Forests - will fulfill the Forests Section 106 requirements as well as involve collaboration with tribes and PA parties. Appropriate management practices to eliminate or reduce adverse effects to specific historic and prehistoric sites and places will be developed.

Management Direction

Implement the PA in order to 1) identify, monitor, and manage significant heritage resources; 2) continue consultation with affected tribes; and 3) coordinate heritage resource management activities with other interested parties.

Allow scientific use consistent with FSM 2323.8 and Forest Plan direction. Permits will be required for any ground disturbing archaeological study under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA, 1979)

Interpret heritage resources and cultural history outside of wilderness.

Facilities

Goals and Objectives

Manage recreation facilities and transportation facilities in accordance with Forest Service policies found in FSM 2323.13, FSH 2321.21, and FSH 23.22.

System Trails

Goals and Objectives

Provide a transportation system that ensures suitable access for the types and numbers of trail users, protection of resources, and is consistent with management objectives for the areas accessed.

Management Direction

Maintain an inventory of system trails.

Maintain system trails to assigned service levels.

Review trail service levels at five-year intervals, or when driven by other management actions, to ensure that trail management objectives are consistent with area management objectives. When adding or removing trails from the Forest Trail inventory, NEPA analysis, including public involvement, will be conducted.

Appropriate levels of NEPA analysis, including public involvement, will be conducted for trail reconstruction projects prior to each project initiation.

User-Created Trails

A user-created trail is any non-constructed path created by the passage of visitors, which is discernible and would not likely recover naturally within one year. User-created trails are not part of the Forest Service Trail inventory, and do not receive funding for maintenance.

Goals and Objectives

Reduce or eliminate resource impacts associated with user-created trails.

Administrative Sites and Structures

Goals and Objectives

Limit structures and improvements for administrative purposes or under special use permit to those actually needed for management, protection, and use of the wilderness for the purposes for which the wilderness was established (FSM 2324.31).

Management Direction

Maintain sites and structures for administration of the wilderness only for the protection of resources, where temporary or other management actions are not providing adequate protection (FSM 2323.13).

Allow drift fences only where the protection of resources or safety of visitors is of concern; not solely for the convenience of the visitor, outfitter or guide.

Maintain the Mt. Whitney toilet facilities at a level commensurate with allowable visitor use and resource protection; not solely for the convenience of the visitor. Materials will be in keeping with the surrounding environment. Support activities will be minimized by efficient and suitable backcountry human waste management techniques. Permission for mechanical and motorized transport of hazardous waste, building materials etc. will be approved annually.

Encourage the placement of automated snow measurement sites (sensors) outside of wilderness.

Evaluate all structures with the following criteria for decisions on retention and use as an administrative site. This does not include historically significant structures (See Appendix K for list of structures).

- 1) Does the structure conflict with stated wilderness goals, objectives, and desired condition of legislations, policy and management plans?
- 2) Are there less intrusive methods of achieving the purpose of the structure?

- 3) Can the activity associated with the site or structure be accomplished outside wilderness and still achieve its objectives?
- 4) Is the activity associated with a site or structure tied to a valid existing right such as a mining claim or right-of-way easement?
- 5) Is there a special provision in legislation that allows this activity?
- 6) How does the site or structure or associated activities benefit the wilderness as a whole as opposed to maximizing one resource?
- 7) Does the structure ensure that human presence is kept to a minimum and the area is affected primarily by forces of nature rather than being manipulated by humans?
- 8) Determine if the structure is the minimum tool necessary to accomplish the activity considering, where relevant, the use of mechanized transport as an alternative.

Minerals

Goals and Objectives

The Forest Service Manual (FSM 2800 and 2320) and the Code of Federal Regulation (36 CFR 228, 292, and 293) provide direction for the management of mineral activities in wilderness where there are valid existing rights. Mineral collecting outside of valid existing claims with approved operating plans is restricted for scientific purposes by special permit only. Prohibit all hazardous materials.

Management Direction

Conduct validity exams on all un-patented mining claims within the wilderness.

Recreation Stock Forage

Goals and Objectives

All lands used by recreation stock will be properly functioning and in satisfactory rangeland condition. Properly functioning riparian lands and meadows are defined as having adequate vegetation, landform, or large woody debris present to:

- 1) Dissipate energies associated with wind & water,
- 2) Filter sediments and aid floodplain development,
- 3) Improve floodwater retention and ground water recharge,
- 4) Develop root masses that stabilize geomorphic features,
- 5) Develop diverse pond and channel characteristics, and
- 6) Support greater biodiversity.

Properly functioning uplands are defined as having adequate integrity of the soil and ecological processes to sustain the capacity of rangelands to satisfy values and produce commodities by the National Research Council 1994 (NRC). Soil and biotic indicators are observed as being stable and resilient at the watershed level.

Satisfactory Condition is defined as having stable soils with continuous, vegetative cover and rooting throughout available profile. Under each action alternative, satisfactory condition is further defined by (1) ecological state and similarity to Potential Natural Community, or (2) forage value ratings for packstock.

Potential Natural Community is defined as the biotic community that would become established if all successional sequences were completed without interferences by humans under the present environmental conditions, and may include naturalized, non-native plant species.

Management Direction

This direction is specific to recreational packstock management with an intended effort to make distinction from management of production livestock (e.g. cattle and sheep).

Assess the hydrologic function of meadow habitats and other special aquatic features during range management analysis. Ensure that characteristics of special features are, at a minimum, at Proper Functioning Condition. Prohibit or mitigate ground-disturbing activities that adversely affect hydrologic processes that maintain water flow, water quality, or water temperature critical to sustaining bog and fen ecosystems and plant species that depend on these ecosystems. During project analysis, survey, map, and develop measures to protect bogs and fens from such activities as trampling by packstock and humans. Criteria for defining bogs and fens include, but are not limited to, presence of: (1) sphagnum moss (*Spagnum spp.*), (2) mosses belonging to the genus *Meessia*, and (3) sundew (*Drosera spp.*). Complete initial plant inventories of bogs and fens within active grazing allotments prior to re-issuing permits.

Prevent disturbance to meadow-associated streambanks and natural lake and pond shorelines caused by resource activities (for example, packstock grazing and dispersed recreation) from exceeding 20 percent of stream reach or 20 percent of natural lake and pond shorelines. Disturbance includes bank sloughing, chiseling, trampling, and other means of exposing bare soil or cutting plant roots.

In stream reaches occupied by, or identified as “essential habitat” in the conservation assessment for, the Lahonton and Paiute cutthroat trout, limit streambank disturbance from livestock to 10 percent of the occupied or “essential habitat” stream reach. Cooperate with State and Federal agencies to develop streambank disturbance standards for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species. Use the regional streambank assessment protocol. Implement corrective action where disturbance limits have been exceeded.

Use Grazing Response Index methods and forage utilization standards in conjunction with rangeland suitability criteria, range readiness, and recreation strategy objectives, to maintain or reach desired conditions. Expediently determine rangeland suitability for specific sites after completion of resource inventories or completion of NEPA analysis. A Packstock Management Guide would be used to reflect this current management direction (see Appendix G).

Conduct monitoring of these packstock management guides by wilderness managers. The primary need for utilization standards is to adjust or establish recreational stock grazing allocations.

Determine ecological status on all key areas monitored for grazing utilization prior to establishing utilization levels. Use regional ecological scorecards and range plant list in regional range handbooks to determine ecological status. Analyze meadow ecological status every 3 to 5 years. If meadow ecological status is determined to be moving in a downward trend, modify or suspend grazing. Include ecological status data in a spatially explicit Geographical Information System database.

Apply the utilization standards according to vegetation types described in the *R5 Rangeland Plant List (1998)* using the key species and key area concept. These standards are based on relative utilization or that percent of use of current production, which is measured at the time packstock leave the area. They are also based on the height/weight relationship of the plant and include all herbivory by livestock, wildlife, and insects. Where practical and beneficial, use stubble height standards for key species based on the selected utilization standard at a given key area.

Under intensive grazing strategies, where meadows are receiving a period of rest, utilization levels can be higher than the levels described above if the meadow is maintained in late seral status and meadow-associated species are not being impacted. Degraded meadows (such as those in early seral status with greater than 10 percent of the meadow area in bare soil and active erosion) require total rest from grazing until they have recovered and have moved to mid- or late seral status.

Existing special use permits will be reviewed as soon as practicable to determine whether modifications to grazing clauses are necessary to conserve willow flycatcher, Yosemite toad, great gray owl, and riparian and meadow ecosystems. When a determination is made that willow flycatcher, Yosemite toad, great gray owl or a species listed under the ESA is occupying a site, decisions modifying permits to protect those sites will be made in an expeditious manner, but no later than one year after determining that a site is occupied. Forest Service administrative grazing activities will be subject to the same reviews and mitigations. This direction is consistent with the standards and guidelines of the *Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment*.

Search and Rescue

Goals and Objectives

The County Sheriff has primary responsibility for search and rescue (SAR) operations. A SAR guide will be developed that meets wilderness objectives to ensure consistency across the wildernesses. The safety of the victim and the rescuers are considered priority in emergency situations.

Management Direction

In situations involving life and safety of people in the wilderness approval to use motorized equipment and mechanized transport, including medical evacuations by helicopter, will be determined by the Forest Supervisor.

Develop a Memorandum of Understanding with County Sheriffs for approval and uses of mechanized transport and motorized equipment.

Evaluate all search and rescue operations for compliance with guidelines.

Special Uses Management

Goals and Objectives

Permit special uses in accordance with agency policy, laws and regional and forest direction. Within the ceilings established in each alternative, commercial special use permits that are

allowed within these wilderness areas must be shown to meet an identified public need, and to meet Agency objectives and provide benefits to the wilderness resource.

Management Direction

Authorize commercial operations only with a valid special use permit.

Do not permit competitive events, training events, and contests. (FSM 2323.13h)

Do not permit filming for commercial purposes, guidebooks, television, or film, as instructed by Forest Service national direction.

Identify maximum numbers of stock in the special use permit and condition by site-specific needs and objectives.

Identify areas and destinations of operations in the special use permit.

Signing

Goals and Objectives

Signing at trailheads will be sufficient to provide all important wilderness education, regulation and restriction information. Provide minimal signing within the wilderness - directional signing at trail junctions and for resource protection in accordance with FSH 7109.11 (5-47).

Management Direction

Ensure that all signing within the wilderness will be of durable wood species.

Identify areas where motorized or mechanical vehicle trespass is a problem. Coordinate with engineering, lands, and law enforcement staff to accomplish survey, signing and enforcement.

Soils

Goals and Objectives

Maintain soil quality and long-term soil productivity by maintaining soil porosity, organic matter, hydrologic function (infiltration, water table, drainage, percolation, etc.), and buffering capacity (soil filtering and chemical regulation properties).

Management Direction

Take actions to limit soil displacement and erosion that results from human activity and authorized uses to a rate similar to natural erosion.

Maintain large woody material and forest duff and litter to provide for nutrient cycling and soil organisms.

Limit areas of detrimental compaction and practices that could interfere with water table or subsurface flow.

Refine threshold values for organic matter, erosion, and porosity to fit ecological communities and site-specific conditions as needed and as information becomes available.

Tribal Relations

Goals and Objectives

Maintain and enhance tribal relations.

Facilitate appropriate use by Native American tribes, communities and traditional practitioners.

Implement the Programmatic Agreement entitled *Controlling Impacts on Historic Properties: Management of Ansel Adams, John Muir, Dinkey Lakes Wildernesses, Sierra and Inyo National Forests*.

Management Direction

Consult with Native Americans in a manner consistent with the NHPA, ARPA, the “Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act” (1991), Executive Order 13084, “Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments”, dated May 14, 1998, and the “American Indian Religious Freedom Act” (PL 95-341).

Facilitate traditional Native American use practices that are not in conflict with the Wilderness Act.

Establish government-to-government protocols for the management of traditional places when appropriate.

Vegetation

Goals and Objectives

Natural ecological processes will be allowed to determine the composition and distribution of plant communities.

Threatened, Endangered, Proposed and Sensitive species (TEPS) will be monitored to ensure protection. Where appropriate, management actions will be developed to help ensure their protection.

Prevent or minimize the introduction and establishment of weeds as a result of pack and saddle stock and erosion control projects.

Management Direction

Conduct surveys and monitor, as warranted based on initial surveys, all known sensitive plant occurrences where impacts from visitor use may be affecting the vigor or reproductive capacity of the populations.

Where monitoring indicates trampling impacts to sensitive plants are occurring, relocate trails or campsites as needed to prevent a loss of viability or trend to federal listing of any sensitive plant species.

Encourage use of certified weed free hay and straw. The program will be phased in as certified weed free hay and straw become available. This would apply to pack and saddle stock used by public, livestock permittees, outfitter guide permittees, and local, State, or Federal agencies.

Water Quality

Goals and Objectives

Manage wilderness uses to not degrade water quality. Ensure that lakes and streams meet or exceed State and Federal water quality standards. Maintain favorable conditions of stream flow and timing of high quality water.

Management Direction

Collect and periodically monitor baseline information on implementation of water quality protection measures.

Meet or exceed State Water Quality Standards.

Apply the following Best Management Practices (BMPs): They are further described in the Forest Service *Region 5 Soil and Water Conservation Handbook* (FSH R5 Supp 1):

- 1) Protect water quality. This practice prohibits placing in or near a stream, lake, or other water body, substances which may degrade water quality. This includes human and animal waste. Areas may be closed in order to restrict use in problem areas (PRACTICE 4-10).
- 2) Locate pack and riding stock facilities (such as hitchlines, hitchposts, fenced pastures) or corrals at safe locations away from springs, streams, lakes, wet meadows, and any other surface waters (PRACTICE 4-11).
- 3) Revegetate surface disturbed areas. This is a corrective practice to stabilize the soil surface in the disturbed area. The vegetation selected will be suited to meet the management objectives for the area, and will comply with current Forest Service policy for seeding/revegetation (PRACTICE 5-4).
- 4) Protect Wetlands. The Forest Service does not permit activities in wetlands whenever there is a practical alternative. Evaluate proposed actions in wetlands based on its effect to the survival and quality of the wetlands (PRACTICE 7-3).
- 5) Control activities under special use permit. These activities must be operated to protect surface and subsurface water quality from physical, chemical, and biological pollutants. The SUP shall detail conditions that must be met to continue operating including measures necessary to protect water quality (PRACTICE 7-5).
- 6) Protect watershed resources by closing part or all of the watershed to use (seasonal, temporary, or permanent). A watershed may have sensitive areas or be in poor condition so that any use during a given portion of the year could result in impacts to water quality. In other cases, water quality may already be impaired, and improvements are not considered feasible without substantially reducing or eliminating further use (PRACTICE 7-7).
- 7) Control stock numbers and season of use. Determine proper stock numbers, utilization rate, and season of use to protect water quality. Ensure that adequate field checks are made to determine range readiness to assure that the soil is not too wet, that sufficient forage growth has occurred, and that soil and vegetation condition and trends are verified (PRACTICE 8-2).

- 8) Control stock distribution within grazed areas. Areas sensitive to concentrated and/or prolonged use that will result in lost vegetation cover and soil compaction will not have concentrated use of stock permitted (PRACTICE 8-3).

Wildlife and Fisheries

Goals and Objectives

Protect indigenous wildlife and fish from human caused conditions that could lead to Federal and/or Regional listing as a TEPS species. Listed TEPS species and their habitats will be protected and assisted in their recovery. Recovery Plans for all federally listed species will govern management activities that may affect those species, and restrictions on recreation and other uses may be necessary. A biological evaluation (for sensitive species) or biological assessment (for threatened or endangered species) has been conducted to determine whether any proposed forest projects or activities would affect a TEPS species.

Increase the knowledge base for TEPS and candidate species through inventorying and monitoring to determine status of habitat and populations. Monitoring will determine effects of human activities on populations and habitat, the trends of TEPS species populations, and indicate the need for protective management and mitigation measures. As funding provides, focus on the Yosemite toad, mountain yellow-legged frog, Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep, and Piute and Lahontan cutthroat trout.

Management Direction

Restrict or prohibit entry of dogs into areas where monitoring indicates unacceptable impacts are occurring to any threatened, endangered, proposed or sensitive species.

Require that visitors store food properly to prevent wildlife and black bears in particular from gaining access to the food, trash, or other non-native food sources.

Yosemite toad

When Yosemite toad populations are located, survey the site to assess recreational impacts, implement the following:

Exclude livestock (including pack and saddle stock) from standing water and saturated soils in wet meadows and associated streams and springs occupied by Yosemite toads during the breeding and rearing season (as determined locally). If physical exclusion of livestock, such as fencing, is impractical then exclude grazing from the entire meadow until after September 1. Wet meadows are defined as relatively open meadows with moderate to low amounts of woody vegetation that have standing water on June 1st or for more than two weeks following snow melt. Determine if the meadow has standing water and saturated soils after June 1st, if the meadows do not have these conditions for more than two weeks, grazing may be allowed only in those portions of the meadow where those conditions do not exist. Within the historic range of the species, surveys of unoccupied suitable habitat to determine presence of Yosemite toads must be completed with three years of this Record of Decision. If surveys are not completed for any meadow, occupancy will be assumed and the above restrictions apply.

(From Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment, Record of Decision, RCA41, January 2001)

Move campsites, trails, etc., away from the breeding, rearing and hibernation habitats where impacts from recreation have been analyzed and determined to be unacceptable.

Continue to monitor the site to determine if mitigation is effective or if further corrective action is necessary.

Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep

Restrict dogs and goats in bighorn sheep occupied habitat.

Implement bighorn sheep recovery plan upon completion.

Monitor bighorn sheep populations to identify changes in occupied habitat and implement changes in management as necessary.

Monitor human recreational use within bighorn sheep habitat to determine if additional management measures are necessary in areas outside the California Bighorn Sheep Zoological Areas.

Willow Flycatcher, Northern Goshawk, Great Grey Owl, California Spotted Owl, Pacific Fisher, and American Marten

Implement management direction and survey requirements identified in the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment Standards and Guidelines.

Land and Resource Management Plan Amendments

Inyo National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Non-Significant Amendment.

The following Management Direction on page 111 in the Inyo LRMP would be removed:

Establish capacity limits for each wilderness and implement entry limits on specific trailheads to regulate use when use exceeds capacity.

Apply trailhead entry quotas to both commercial and noncommercial users.

The following Management Direction would be added to the Inyo LRMP on page 111:

Through analysis determine if use limitations are necessary to protect wilderness resources. If determined necessary, apply appropriate methods to control commercial and non-commercial users.

The following would be removed from Appendix A page 300 in the Inyo LRMP:

Under the section titled, “EXISTING PLANS INCORPORATED WITH DIRECTION TO REVISE OR UPDATE”

- *John Muir Wilderness Plan (1979)*

- *Minarets Wilderness Management Plan (1979) (revise to include 1984 wilderness additions)*

Sierra National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Amendment.

The following Standard and Guideline would be deleted from the Sierra NF LRMP:

S&G #339. Develop wilderness management plans utilizing limits of acceptable change.

Alternatives Considered in Detail

Table 2.0. Summary of the Issues and How They Were Addressed in Each Alternative

ISSUE	Alternative 1 Modified	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (No Action)	Alternative 4
COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES	Allocations of service days by activity and daily limits by trailhead. Needs assessment, high two years of use, limiting factors and desired conditions determine use levels	Allocations of service days by activity and daily limits by trailhead. Needs assessment, high two years of use, limiting factors and desired conditions determine use levels	Commercial use levels are reduced based on concerns identified in needs assessment and desired conditions of the alternative	Case by case decisions on reductions and increases to allocations	Maintain existing allocations
COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL CONTROLS	Commercial, temporal, and spatial controls based on assessment of resource capability. Establish commercial limits on trailhead entry. Forest Service issues all wilderness permits. Use of trails not suitable or recommended for stock will not be authorized.	Commercial, temporal, and spatial controls based on assessment of resource capability. Establish commercial limits on trailhead entry. Forest Service issues all wilderness permits	One quota, everyone competes, non-commercial and commercial visitors. Forest Service issues all wilderness permits	General limits on temporal controls. Use levels, number of stock and use patterns managed through annual operating plans. Some operators and Forest Service issue wilderness permits	Manage use through annual operating plans. Allow for wilderness permits to be issued by co-operators and Forest Service
COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES GROWTH	Allow for growth in certain activities as identified in needs assessment. Creates temporary use pool of 1500 service days each on the east and west sides.	Allow for growth in certain activities as identified in needs assessment, utilizing the limiting factors framework for decisions on resource capability	Encourage growth in operations outside wilderness	Case by case decisions on allocations. Backpacking O/G's must go through the quota	Allow current allocations to be maintained, and make case-by-case assessment of need when growth opportunities arise
VISITOR USE LEVELS (CAPACITY)	Use levels are established based on a process of examining current resource concerns. Use levels are adjusted according to the concerns (limiting factors)	Use levels are established based on a process of examining current resource concerns. Use levels are adjusted according to the concerns (limiting factors)	Reduce use in areas of concern. Maintain high levels of solitude across the landscape	Maintain existing quotas and manage visitor use at current levels	Maintain existing allocation levels. This allows for growth. Manage for a pool of "non-use" with established protocol for distribution of non-use

ISSUE	Alternative 1 Modified	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (No Action)	Alternative 4
WILDERNESS PERMITS AND QUOTA PERIOD	Quota period May 1 – Nov 1.	Quota’s enforced year round. Reservation period May 1 – Nov 1 (east) and June 15– Sept 15 (west)	Same as Alt 1	Maintain current dates (third Friday in June – September 15; Mt. Whitney day and overnight May 15-Nov 1)	Same as Alt 1.
VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT -CROWDING-	Manage use by three categories of social conditions. Concentrates visitor use in traditionally popular destination areas. Allows standards for camp encounters to be high in some zones and very low in other zones	Manage use by three categories of social conditions. Concentrates visitor use in traditionally popular destination areas. Allows standards for camp encounters to be high in some zones and very low in other zones	Cap use at lower levels than present to achieve dispersal of use across the landscape	Manage some areas with high use. Accommodate changing use patterns	Standards for crowding applied to trail/trail-less. Accommodate changing use patterns
CAMPSITE MANAGEMENT	Designated campsites and/or destination quota’s or quota adjustments applied when standards are exceeded	Designated campsites and destination quota’s applied when standards are exceeded	Reduce use levels to accommodate appropriate dispersal of sites	Manage campsites on a case by case basis	Same as Alt 3
VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT -CAMPSITE DENSITY	Campsite density standards established and vary by recreation use category	Campsite density standards established and vary by recreation use category	Standards for density of sites are consistent across planning area	Manage sites on a case by case basis	Standards for trail/and Trail-less
CROSS-COUNTRY PARTY SIZE	No change for cross country group size, 15 people and 25/stock	No change for cross country group size, 15 people and 25/stock	Party size for cross country will be 8 people/8 stock	Same as Alt 1	Same as Alt 1
DAY USE	Criteria established for case-by-case decision making with NEPA documentation	Criteria established for case-by-case decision making with NEPA documentation	Establish standards for day use	In extreme situations day use may be controlled with proper NEPA documentation	Day use levels are unregulated
ELEVATIONAL CAMP FIRE RESTRICTION	Elevation closure at 10,000 north of Glacier divide/Bishop creek and 10,400 south of Glacier divide/Bishop creek	Elevation closure at 10,400 across the planning area	Elevation closure at 10,000 north of Glacier divide/Bishop creek and 10,400 south of Glacier divide/Bishop creek	No elevational restrictions	Establish “Closed to wood gathering” areas

ISSUE	Alternative 1 Modified	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3 (No Action)	Alternative 4
CAMPFIRE RESTRICTIONS	Criteria for site-specific closures to campfires	Criteria for site-specific closures to campfires	Criteria for site-specific closures that emphasize restricting campfire use	Case by case site-specific closures based on criteria in current direction.	Establish “Closed to wood gathering” areas. Emphasize education
SETBACK FROM WATER	Campsites 100’ from water and in no case closer than 50 ft. from water	Campsites 100’ from water and in no case closer than 50 ft. from water	Sites 100’ from water	Sites 100’ from water and in no cases closer than 25 ft. from water	Setback sites 25’ from water
USER CREATED TRAILS	Criteria for decisions regarding maintaining or obliterating use trails	Criteria for decisions regarding maintaining or obliterating use trails	Obliterate all user created trails that have any level of impact or resource damage occurring, using established criteria	No criteria for assessing use trail impacts. Problems addressed on a case-by-case basis	Same as Alt 3
TRAILS	Trail Management – all trails open to foot and stock, except Mt. Whitney and Meysan Lakes trails which will remain closed to stock travel. Some trails will be identified not suitable or recommended for stock.	Trail Management – all trails open to foot and stock, except Mt. Whitney and Meysan Lakes trails which will remain closed to stock travel	Some trails designated as hiker/foot travel only (Shepherd, Taboose, Sawmill, Baxter)	All trails open to foot and stock travel, except Mt. Whitney and Meysan Lakes. Some trails not recommended for stock use	Same as Alt 3
REC. STOCK FORAGE - UTILIZATION	Utilization standards vary by landscape zone, recreation category and vegetation type.	Utilization standards at light use levels based on vegetation types managed @ high similarity to potential natural conditions	Utilization standards at slight use levels based on vegetation types managed @ very high similarity to potential natural conditions	Utilization standards at moderate to high use levels based on recent historic grazing practices	Utilization standards at moderate use levels based on vegetation types managed @ high forage condition ratings
REC. STOCK FORAGE - Range Readiness	Establishes range readiness criteria.	Range readiness guidelines based on annual precipitation, soil moisture & plant development	Same as Alt 1	Range readiness guided by Special use permits and operating plans	Same as Alt 3

Alternative 1 – Modified Preferred Alternative

This alternative was developed in response to further analysis of and public comment on the RDEIS. With this alternative, the Forest Service manages for resource quality so that the composition, structure, and function of ecosystems is not influenced or modified by human activity. Where composition, structure, and function are compromised by human uses (included but not limited to camping practices, recreational stock grazing, natural fire, administrative tools, and other legitimate uses), human restraint and minimum tools will be used to insure ecological integrity is maintained to a high standard.

Three categories for managing recreation use allow for a range of wilderness recreation characteristics to coexist.

Commercial use levels are commensurate with resource sustainability, responsive to limiting factor concerns, and activities are consistent with agency's assessment of need. Restrictions on commercial operator access will be managed so as to be consistent with non-commercial use access, where rationing methods have been in place for over twenty years. It reflects equity in access as well as recognizes the need for authorized uses to be managed with as much flexibility as is needed to protect the resource.

Commercial Activities

Goals and Objectives

Manage Outfitter/Guide (O/G) operations in a manner consistent with the purposes of the Wilderness Act, to provide for public use and enjoyment of the wilderness areas, and to protect and enhance the wilderness resource and experience.

Management Direction

The following activities can be authorized to be provided by commercial services to the public. These activities are determined to be necessary to realize the goals and purposes of the Wilderness Act (See Appendix D for definition of activities).

- Packstock support
- Packstock full service or all expense trips
- Mountaineering, involving technical climbing
- Credited educational
- Winter mountaineering
- Backpacking
- Non-traditional stock supported trips i.e. llama, goats
- Day rides on horseback

Use the highest two years of the past five years of actual use to re-allocate use every five years. The first allocation to take place on implementation of this plan, will be based on years 1995 to 1999 use data as identified in the Needs Assessment (Appendix D).

Review and adjust commercial allocations every five years.

The Forest Service will issue visitor permits for all commercial trips commencing on National Forest System land entering wilderness.

Commercial overnight use will be regulated as described in the Permit and Rationing systems section.

All reservations for wilderness permits are subject to the same reservation fee.

All winter mountaineering and touring trips must be approved by the Forest Service by itinerary.

Equestrian day rides will be approved as a distinct allocation, and locations will be approved in the annual operating plans. Where areas of congestion or concerns occur, the Forest Service will work with the operators to identify alternative locations.

All commercial packstock must stay on designated trails, except where authorized in advance by the Forest Service for alternative routes or to access campsites and grazing areas.

Do not authorize commercial packstock use on trails not recommended for stock.

All guides and employees of operators must have an authorized wilderness permit for overnight use.

The upper limits allowed for services provided by commercial operations are identified in Table 2.1. West side entry allocations include use for the Ansel Adams, John Muir and Dinkey Lakes Wilderness. East side allocations are for the Ansel Adams and John Muir Wilderness.

Table 2.1. Alternative 1 - Modified - Commercial Allocation of Service Days

Activity	West side entry Allocation (Service Days)	East side entry Allocation (Service Days)
Packstock supported	3,000	13,300
Backpacking	12,000	2,100
Non-traditional packstock	200	500
Mountaineering	100	2,000
Winter Mountaineering/touring	500	1,000
Credited educational	1,100	750
Day Rides	600	5,000
Temporary Use Pool	1,500	1,500
Total	19,000	26,150

Assess adequacy of needs assessment every five to ten years as demographics, use patterns or conditions change and change requires re-evaluation. Make adjustments if necessary.

Ensure that activities and itineraries that are approved are wilderness-dependent and location appropriate.

Managing the Commercial Service Day Pool

Manage a temporary pool to be available for incidental or temporary use and for assignments not to exceed one year, with priority given to services that are not currently being met.

Provide incentives for operators that continually exceed meeting wilderness management objectives.

Base determinations of pool allocations on resource capability and needed services. Use the limiting factors worksheet outlined in the needs assessment for reference values.

Criteria for assigning temporary use:

- Proposed service responds to an unmet need as identified in the needs assessment.
- Itineraries for additional uses must be consistent with resource objectives for the area and approved by the Forest Service.
- Proposed services must meet the highest standards for resource protection. Examples include: “Leave No Trace” Masters courses, greatly reduced party size, greatly reduced ratio of stock to clients for pack supported trips.

Recreation

Goals and Objectives

Manage the wilderness to allow for recreation use at levels that are ecologically sustainable. Provide a range of opportunities for use and solitude across the wilderness landscape. Allow for recreation use in popular destination areas and assure reasonable access to the public. Assure that in areas of concentrated use, that use does not expand or enlarge over time. Manage the majority of the wilderness at a low density of recreational use insuring the highest quality of pristine wilderness. Assure no degradation in resources or experiential quality.

Management Direction

Establish three recreation use categories that will be used to manage recreational visitor use impacts. These three categories will define the acceptable levels of social and ecological conditions affected by visitor use (Table 2.2).

Monitor total use levels. If total use in any area increases by 50% or more, assess impacts associated with the use and make determinations if further management actions are needed to maintain desired characteristics.

Identify limiting factors that may lead to site-specific restrictions, mitigations, or reductions in use.

Table 2.2. Alternative 1 - Modified - Desired Condition of Recreation Categories

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Social	These areas provide for the highest opportunities for solitude and are predominately free from evidence of human activities. Encounters with other visitors while traveling or camping are very infrequent. This environment offers the highest degree of challenge, self-reliance, and risk.	High occasions of solitude while traveling and camping outside the primary trail corridors will be likely. Along primary trail corridors encounters with other visitors while traveling or camping will be higher than category 1 areas but far less than category 3 areas. Trail junctions and scenic points will be likely for camping encounters and campsites may be within site or sound of each other. This environment offers the high degree of challenge, self-reliance, and risk.	In these areas, recreation use levels will be maintained to provide less levels of solitude than other two categories, yet high opportunities for solitude will exist during the non-peak use season. During peak use season, opportunities for experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds and impacts of human activities will be less than other categories. The probability of encountering other visitors on the trail and at campsites is more than other areas.
Resource-general	An unmodified natural environment characterizes the area. Ecological and natural processes are minimally affected by the action of users. Environmental impacts are low and restricted to minor losses of vegetation where camping occurs and along travel routes. Most impacts recover on an annual basis and are apparent to few visitors.	A highly unmodified natural environment characterizes the area. In a few areas, where moderate levels of use will concentrate, natural conditions may be more affected by the actions of users. These impacts are mitigated with a higher level of management presence. Impacts may persist from year to year and may be apparent to some visitors. Most visitors will not discern impacts.	A mostly unmodified natural environment characterizes this area. Site-specific impacts to vegetation and soil around campsites often persist from year to year and are apparent to most visitors. Resource impacts are not allowed to degrade and management presence will be more necessary to insure continual improvement to the conditions and non-degradation of the natural resources.
Campsites	Campsites are at low-density levels and show minor impacts that will rarely persist year to year.	Concentration of campsites exists at trail junctions and popular destination points. The number of sites accommodates moderate use with no new sites forming over time. Campsites may occasionally be within sight and sound of others. Bare mineral soil may exist on some sites and may persist from year to year. Outside these areas campsites and impacts associated with camping will be light.	Concentration of campsites is moderately high at destinations and along travel corridor. The number of sites accommodates peak use in order to prevent the formation of new sites. Bare mineral soil may exist on some sites and may persist from year to year.

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Vegetation/ Soil Conditions	There is very little vegetation loss or alteration of duff and litter layer by human use.	Moderate soil compaction and loss of vegetation. Minimal erosion occurs on the disturbed sites.	Moderate soil compaction and loss of vegetation, litter, and duff is expected on many visitor created trails, camp areas, and areas used by livestock. Minimal erosion occurs on the disturbed sites and is mitigated to insure long-term impacts do not occur.
Riparian Areas	Riparian, lakeshore and stream channel conditions show no measurable degradation due to human uses.	Riparian, lakeshore and stream channel conditions show a temporary change within standards, which could be expected to persist from year to year at a few sites. These impacts should be mitigated and prevented from occurring if evidence of potential long-term impacts occurs.	Riparian, lakeshore and stream channel conditions show temporary changes within standards, which could be expected to persist from year to year at some sites. Mitigation measures will be implemented to accommodate moderate levels of human recreation impacts.
Managerial	Management focuses on sustaining and enhancing the natural ecosystem. Signs may be present in very rare cases, for resource protection only, and at system trail junctions. Management actions may occasionally include direct, on-site actions and site-specific regulations may be used in unusual cases where resources require higher levels of protection. Indirect methods of accomplishing management objectives will predominate with exceptions for insuring visitor use be maintained at low levels to insure impacts are contained and do not persist. Managerial influences on trail system will be minimal to accomplish objectives of resource protection.	Management emphasizes sustaining and enhancing the natural ecosystem. Signing is minimal, providing for resource protection and direction at major trail intersections. Management action may frequently include direct, on-site actions and site-specific regulations may be used to meet management objectives for resource protection. Primary trail corridors will have highly maintained and constructed trails that will support access to popular destinations and travel routes. Secondary trails will allow for moderate dispersal of use but will be maintained in a manner that will be consistent with a more pristine and primitive experience than primary trail corridors.	Management emphasizes sustaining and protecting natural conditions. Management actions will often be direct and management presence to mitigate visitor use impacts on the resource will be more noticeable. Campsites may need to be identified and delineated. Site-specific closures to camping, campfires, and site-specific regulations may be implemented. Signs used for resource protection will be acceptable in these areas. A moderate density of social trails will be present in destination camping areas. Maintain Forest Service presence to provide education contact and manage high levels of use.

Figure 2.1. Recreation Category Map

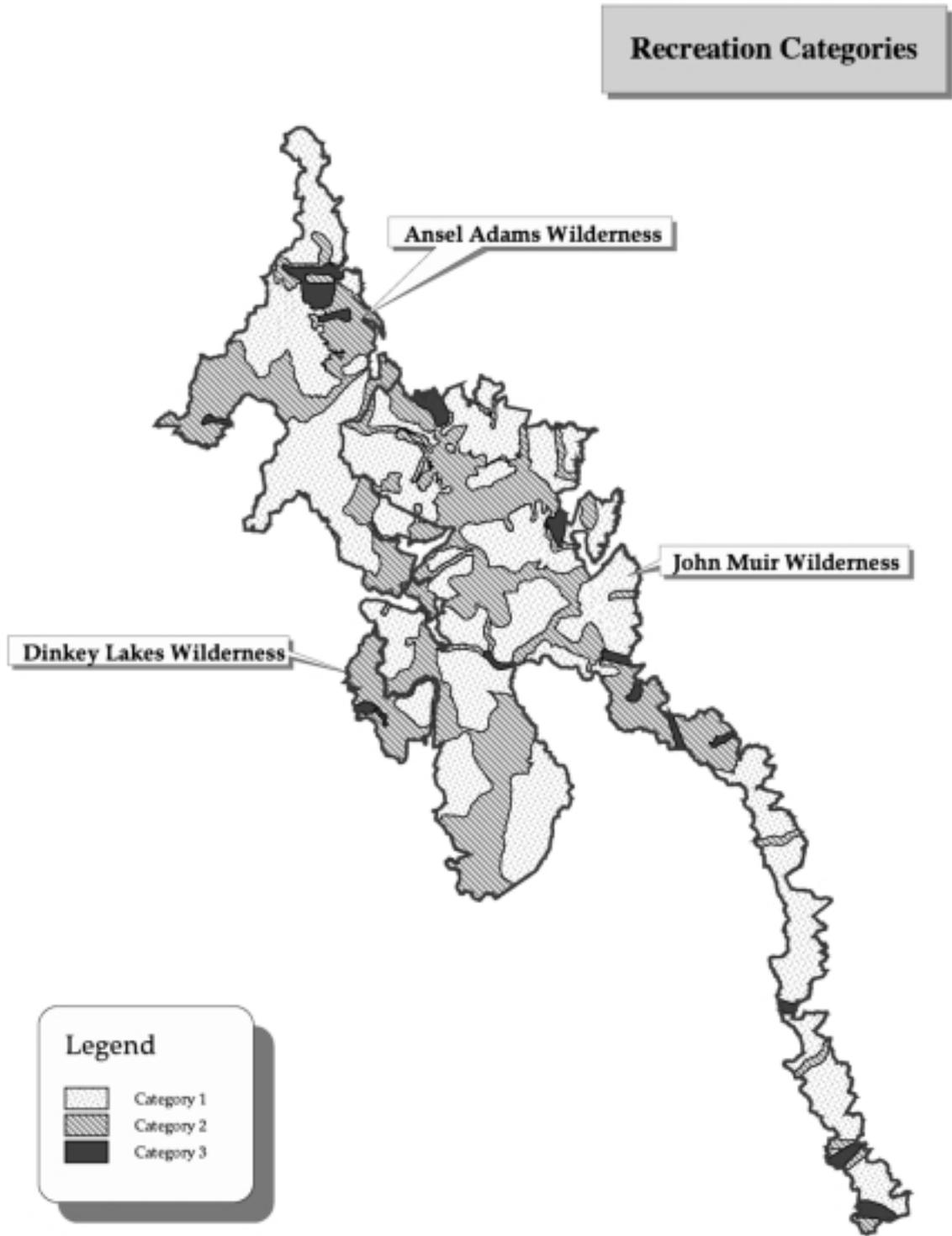


Table 2.3. Alternative 1 - Modified - Recreation Categories by Acreage and Percentage of Land base

Category	Units	Total Acres	Percent
1	33	485,568	58
2	22	327,489	39
3	13	29,847	3

Winter Use

Management Direction

To maintain low levels of winter use, apply the following Recreation Categories. When the snow depth averages 2 feet in the majority the planning area or from approximately November 1 to May 1, manage as Recreation Category 1. Manage as Recreation Category 2 the following exceptions: the entire drainages of Shepherd Pass, Rock Creek, Lakes Basin, Piute Pass, and Bishop Creek; and from Agnew Meadow to Donahue Pass

Day Use

Management Direction

Conduct day use studies as appropriate. Acquire baseline data on day use levels across the Wildernesses.

Consider and assess if day use levels are causing unacceptable social or ecological impacts or user conflicts.

Consider evaluation of day use levels when changes of more than 20% occur. Conduct public involvement to help determine alternative approaches for accommodating or managing day use levels.

Continue to manage Mt. Whitney day use through a limited entry quota.

System Trails

Management Direction

Maintain system trails to meet management objectives for visitor use and resource protection. Also, consider the recreation categories for the areas that a trail accesses and adjust trail maintenance levels to match the three recreation categories.

When making decisions on trail maintenance, reconstruction, and relocation projects, give priority consideration to riparian and aquatic resources and overall watershed condition.

When conducting routine trail condition surveys, identify and document resource impacts and locations.

Emphasize trail relocation away from sensitive areas, such as meadows, riparian environs, known TES populations or habitat, heritage resources or other limiting factors when mitigating resource impacts.

Actively restore and/or stabilize trails that have been abandoned (due to realignment or closure) that will not heal naturally. Some examples include abandoned trails that alter local hydrology, deeply compacted soils, and sites with continued inappropriate traffic, increased entrenchment or widening.

Do not upgrade any trails from maintenance level 1 and 2 solely for the purpose of facilitating stock use.

Do not construct new trails.

Add user-created trails, or conduct major reconstruction to trails on the Forest Trail System solely for the purpose of providing improved or easier access to an area. Add user-created trails to the system only when there is an overriding benefit to the protection of the wilderness resource.

Consider removing trails from the system (with appropriate public involvement) when concerns are identified, such as limited or no use, catastrophic natural event, unmitigatable resource impacts, changed from original need (ie: unneeded mining road/trail), or others. Evaluate the need for physical closure or allow natural recovery, depending on expected resource impacts.

Campfires

Management Direction

Prohibit wood campfires in areas above 10,000-foot elevation in the northern portion of the planning area and 10,400 feet in the southern portion. The line dividing the two elevation zones runs generally east to west following the northern boundary of the Middle Owens Valley Watershed to where it meets the northern boundary of the Upper South Fork San Joaquin Watershed known as Glacier Divide; then north boundary of Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park and continues west along the southern boundary of the Middle South Fork San Joaquin Watershed (see map).

Continue existing closures to wood campfires (see map for reference), however, in Cottonwood basin, the elevational restriction will change from 10,300 to 10,400.

Close other areas to wood campfires, as needed using the following criteria. (The rating system referred to is described in the campsite monitoring protocol, Appendix H).

Monitor impacted areas biannually for change. When 50 percent of campsites change by a factor of one for firewood availability rating, consider for closure to campfires.

Consider campfire closures in areas where the apparent natural level of the duff, litter, and fine woody material on the soil surface has been reduced by human activity of wildfire so that soil cover is inadequate for erosion protection and nutrient cycling based upon the regional soil quality standards.

Permit gas, propane, and multi-fuel stoves and heaters in areas closed to wood campfires.

Prohibit wood burning stoves (including “Zip” stoves), charcoal fires, packed in firewood, or fire pans within areas closed to wood campfires.

Campsite Conditions

Management Direction

Campsites will be located 100 feet from water. In areas where terrain does not permit a campsite to be 100 feet from water, sites will be no closer than 50 feet from water.

Consider designating campsites in popular destination areas.

Inform and educate visitors on proper campsite selection and camp behavior including “Leave No Trace” principles.

When occupied campsite, campsite condition, or campsite density standards are exceeded, consider establishing destination quotas, designating campsites or reducing use

Manage Trail Camp and Outpost Camp in the Mt. Whitney Zone as exceptions to the occupied campsite standards.

Close and rehabilitate campsites when not in compliance with management direction for site density or resource objectives, such as proximity to water or trails.

Maintain data records and monitor success of closures, rehabilitation, containment of the site, and other management actions.

Monitor for trends and changes in conditions and conduct periodic assessments. If campsite condition class deteriorates more than one class, contain the site, mitigate impacts and maintain site character.

Monitor campsites for density and condition class ratings using the protocol identified in the Monitoring Plan. Rate the following factors: density of vegetation, total area of campsite, bare mineral soil, camp development, social trails, and mutilations, distance to water, distance to water and available firewood (Appendix H).

Manage campsite density in accordance with the following standards.

Table 2.4. Alternative 1 - Modified - Campsite Density Standards

Recreation Use Category	Campsite Density Standards
Category 3	Density of campsites will be moderate to high at some destinations. Density of sites will not exceed 4 sites per acre. Most sites will be managed as condition class 3 and 4 sites, with signs of moderate impacts that will be mitigated with direct techniques. Some class 5 sites will be appropriate and monitored frequently and contained when changes are detected.
Category 2	Density of sites will be moderate, not to exceed 3 sites per acre. Many sites at destination locations will be condition class 3 with occasionally condition class 4. Most sites will be condition class 2.
Category 1	Density of sites will be low, not to exceed 1 site /acre. Most sites will be condition class 2 and 1. Very few class 3 sites will exist.

Occupied Campsites

Management Direction

Use the measurement of “occupied campsites” within sight or sound of each other as the indicator for crowding and opportunities for solitude.

Identify benchmark points for monitoring occupied campsites. Do not exceed standards on more than 20% of the sample or 3 times a season. See Management Direction under Permit and Rationing System.

Table 2.5. Alternative 1 - Modified - Standards for Occupied Campsites

Recreation Use Category	Number of occupied campsites within sight or sound
Category 1	0
Category 2	2
Category 3	4

Permit and Rationing System

Goals and Objectives

The permit system provides equity in access for all authorized and legitimate uses.

Manage permit system using the simplest method to maximize both ecological resource protection and visitor freedom.

Management Direction

Wilderness permits are required year-round for all overnight use and for Mt. Whitney day use.

The quota season will be from May 1 to November 1. Advanced reservations for permits are recommended for large parties.

Consider implementing destination quotas when standards are exceeded for crowding or when trailhead quotas do not satisfactorily control campsite conditions at interior destinations.

On occasions where commercial outfitters contract out for packing services, one wilderness permit is required for the party; however, both operations will count as service days.

Party size will be accommodated within all quotas under the following conditions and criteria:

- Parties of more than eight people will only be accommodated within the reservable quota.

- If a party of 8 or more is limited by the reservable portion of the quota, AND more than 50% of the quota is available, the party may be accommodated within the next consecutive day's quota.

Consider allowing quotas to limit party size if use patterns change in low use areas due to accommodation of party size.

The rationing system will include 3 types of quotas:

Single Quotas - A single quota will be used in areas where there is low commercial use and/or the desired condition for the area prescribes low levels of use. Monitor these trails to assure that commercial use is not precluding non-commercial public access to these areas, and that recreational use does not increase significantly over time.

Case-by-Case Itinerary Approvals - Entry points with currently low levels of commercial use, no commercial use or that the Forest Service has not identified a compelling reason for commercial services to be provided, use will be approved only on a case-by-case basis using the following criteria:

- Use must meet a need identified in the needs assessment.
- Trips in these areas will not be advertised in brochures or other media.
- Service is occasional in nature and not part of a yearly, repeated operation.
- Use must fit within the quota system.
- In areas where limiting factors have been identified; the appropriate resource specialists must review the proposed use to assure it is consistent with resource objectives.

Multiple Quotas - In areas where there is high demand for visitor use, including commercial service providers, set up multiple quotas. This is especially important where authorized commercial facilities are located adjacent to an entry location.

Table 2.6. Alternative 1 - Modified - Quotas*(All quotas are a measure of numbers of people per day)***Single Quotas**

Inyo NF Entry	Quota	Sierra NF Entry	Quota
Beck	15	Badger	10
Big Pine SF	12	Bear Creek	10
Deer Lake	10	Bear Ridge	10
Fern Lake	10	Cassidy	10
Fern/Yost	8	Chiquito	35
George Lake	10	Cliff Lake	20
Gibbs	8	Crown/Rancheria	10
Glacier Canyon	8	Hells Half Acre	10
Horton Lakes	10	Logan Meadow	10
JMT/PCT South	10	Mammoth	25
Laurel	8	Miller	10
Meysan	10	Mono Creek	30
Parker Creek	10	Onion Springs	10
Red Cones	15	South Fork	10
Sawmill	10	Squaw Dome	10
Shepherd	15	Woodchuck	20
Taboose	10		
Upper Buttermilk	8		

Entry Points for Case-by-case Approval for Commercial Operations*(All quotas are a measure of numbers of people per day)*

INF Entry	Quota	INF Entry	Quota
Baker/Green	8	Tuttle Creek	8
Baxter Pass	8	Tyee	10
Birch	8	Valentine	8
Bloody Canyon	8		
Convict	10		
Gable Lakes	8	SNF Entry	Quota
George/Williamson	8	Willow Mdw	30
Golden Trout	10		
Italy Pass	8		
Mt. Whitney Day Hike	100		
Mt. Whitney Overnight	60		
Red Lake	8		
Trail Crest	25		

Table 2.6. Alternative 1 - Modified –
 Quotas (Continued)
 (All quotas are a measure of numbers of
 people per day)

Multiple Quotas

INF Entry	N/C	Comm	Packer	O/G
Big Pine NF	25		15	8
Bishop Pass	36	15		
Cottonwood Lakes	60	15		
Duck Lake	30	15		
Fish Creek	15	15		
High Trail	20	15		
Hilton Lakes/Creek	15	15		
John Muir Trail, North	10	10		
Kearsarge	60	15		
Lamarck	10	5		
Little Lakes	25	10		
McGee	15	15		
Minaret	10	10		
Mono Pass	20	15		
NF Lone Pine	10	5		
Pine Creek	15	15		
Piute Cr	30	15		
River Trail	30	8		
Rush Creek	30	15		
Sabrina Lake	25	15		
Shadow	30	15		
Tamarack	10	8		
Treasure Lakes	10	8		

SNF Entry	N/C	Comm.	Packer	O/G
Devils/Graveyard	20	10		
Fernandez	21		8	12
Florence	35	15		
Isberg	22		8	8
Jackass/Norris	10	8		
Maxon	25		8	5
Walton	9	8		

User-Created Trails

Goals and Objectives

Allow a low density of user-created travel routes where suitable and where it meets management objectives.

Prevent the creation of additional user-created trails and limit the impacts associated with existing user-created trails.

Emphasize managing or eliminating user-created trails in riparian, meadow, and streamside areas.

Management Direction

Monitor user-created trails for resource condition using established protocol. In areas of concern, inventory and map user-created trails and associated impacts.

Evaluate the need to allow, eliminate, stabilize, or add the user-created trail to the Forest Trail System.

Consider allowing a user-trail to remain, without adding it to the Forest Trail System, under the following conditions:

- a. An existing system trail or another acceptable user-created trail does not provide similar access to a destination.
- b. The user type and level of use meets management objectives for visitation and resource protection for the area.
- c. The user-created trail is not causing identifiable impact to TES species or habitat or to heritage resources.
- d. Incidental physical treatments, including short reroutes and redirection of users, are sufficient to mitigate resource impacts.

Consider physically closing and eliminating a user-created trail under one or more of the following conditions:

- a. An existing system trail or more appropriate user-created trail provides similar access
- b. The user-created trail facilitates levels and types of access that do not meet management objectives for the area
- c. The user-created trail is causing direct, identifiable impacts to TES species or habitat or to heritage resources
- d. Incidental physical treatments, including rerouting and redirection of users, cannot mitigate identified resource impacts
- e. It is likely that closure will be effective at preventing further impacts or establishment of another user-created trail.

Consider adding a user-created trail to the Forest Transportation System (Trail Inventory) and maintain at a determined Service level, after completion of the appropriate analysis and public involvement process, using one or more of the following criteria:

- a. No other existing trail provides access to the destination
- b. The trail provides access consistent with management objectives for visitation and resource protection for the area
- c. The user-created trail is causing extensive resource impacts, which cannot be mitigated with incidental treatments, would likely be controlled through the use of standard trail treatments and basic trail maintenance
- d. Mitigation of the resource impacts caused by the user-trail would likely result in significant or recurring efforts
- e. Closure would likely be ineffective, or would result in the creation of another user-created trail.

Recreation Stock Forage

Goals and Objectives

All rangelands are properly functioning and in satisfactory condition. Satisfactory condition is defined as being in a high seral ecological state, greater than or equal to fifty percent (>= 50%) similarity to Potential Natural Community and having stable soils with continuous, vegetative cover and rooting throughout available profile.

Proposed grazing standards allow sufficient herbaceous forage biomass to provide for high plant vigor, stream bank protection, and sediment entrapment on all meadow and riparian areas.

Management Direction

Use “range readiness” criteria as a primary technique to establish grazing start dates for the annual season of packstock use on key areas. Coordinate with wilderness managers from Yosemite and Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks prior to giving public notice of grazing start dates. Criteria for determining appropriate grazing include:

- Snow course measurements and spring runoff,
- Soil firmness at designated key areas at various elevations,
- Growth development of key forage species at the designated key areas,
- Overall quantity and quality of available forage for the season,
- Site-specific management objectives and limited operating periods for sensitive wildlife species

On key areas use the *Grazing Response Index* method (U.S. Forest Service, 1997) to assess overall grazing effects during the current year and aid in planning the grazing for the following year. Give primary concern for amount of photosynthetically active leaf material remaining for key plants to recover from grazing.

Revise Forest Orders if necessary to establish annual grazing start dates and grazing closure areas, as well as other packstock use regulations for packstock use by private parties.

Table 2.7. Alternative 1 - Modified - Maximum Allowable Utilization Standards for Key Species on Key Areas by Ecological State

Landscape Zone	Rangeland Class	Vegetation Type	High Seral Ecological State	Mid to Low Seral Ecological State
Montane and Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	40% Use By Weight	30% Use By Weight
Montane and Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	20% Use Annual Leader Growth	10% Use Annual Leader Growth
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	20% Use By Weight	10% Use By Weight
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	10% Use Annual Leader Growth	5% Use Annual Leader Growth

Alternative 1 RDEIS Proposed Action

This alternative was the Proposed action and the Preferred Alternative in the RDEIS. Under NEPA it remains the proposed action, but is no longer the agency's preferred alternative. The intent of this alternative is to direct management activities with emphasis placed on maintaining wilderness characteristics, and to provide a range of opportunities for recreation use while protecting natural resource conditions. Three categories will be established for managing recreation use to allow for different recreational characteristics. The first consists of defined areas of contained visitor use that coincides with historical areas of high use. The second and third categories consist of large areas managed for moderate and low levels of use. This approach attempts to concentrate use and impacts in areas of traditional high use and to manage the majority of the landscape for low and moderate levels of use. Impacts associated with recreational use will be managed intensively within concentrated use (Recreation Use Category 3) management areas.

This alternative identifies indicators that will be used to measure levels of change in resource and social conditions and defines standards to trigger management actions to maintain conditions over time.

This alternative maintains overall commercial use at current actual levels and is based upon the Needs Assessment. It does, however, propose restrictions on commercial operators to make those operations more consistent with non-commercial use. While current levels of use are maintained, some reductions will occur within certain areas of use. This occurs where limiting factors were identified and determined that reductions in use will alleviate the concerns.

Based on concerns raised during public involvement, this Alternative addresses several issues including: campfire concerns with an elevational closure; campsite conditions, with density standards for social and resource conditions; the wilderness permit system and trailhead quotas; winter use levels; and user-created trails. Alternative 1 also includes new management direction to address recreation stock forage (grazing) issues.

Commercial Activities

Goals and Objectives

All outfitting/guiding use meets wilderness objectives and management is consistent with non-commercial use.

Management Direction

Manage Outfitter/Guide (O/G) operations to ensure compatibility with the wilderness resource and other visitors.

Approve day ride amounts as a distinct allocation, and approve locations in the annual operating plans. Where areas of congestion or concerns occur, the Forest Service will work with the operators for alternatives.

Allocate use to commercial operators based on the highest two years of the past five years.

The Forest Service will issue wilderness permits for all trips on National Forest System lands.

Implement commercial limits on trailhead entry to reduce temporal and spatial spikes in use. (Table 2-6)

Trailhead entry limits for overnight use will be established and clients of commercial services will be limited by mechanisms described below. A commercial trip can utilize the next day's entry limit to accommodate party size and occasional peak use days. Protocol will be established for this procedure.

All pack stations, backpacking guides, and mountain guides will compete for the commercial quota space.

Require that all reservations made for permits are subject to the same reservation fee as the general public.

Approve by itinerary all winter mountaineering and touring trips.

Require that all commercial packstock must stay on designated trails, except where authorized in advance by the Forest Service, for alternative routes or to access campsites and grazing areas.

Identify limiting factors that may lead to site-specific restrictions, mitigations, or reductions in use.

Continue existing guided use of the wilderness under SUP, subject to allocations by types of activities as identified below.

Identify if the demand for special use permits exceeds the amount to allocate. If so, issue a prospectus to solicit bids for any new O/G services deemed necessary to meet management objectives. Priority for any additional service day allocations will be given to existing permit holders.

The following activities are determined to be appropriate in the Needs Assessment and meet the management objective of public need:

- Packstock support
- Packstock full service or all expense trips
- Mountaineering, involving technical climbing
- Credited educational
- Winter mountaineering
- Backpacking
- Non-traditional stock supported trips i.e. llama, goats
- Day rides on horseback

Table 2.8. Alternative 1 - Commercial Allocation of Service Days

The following table lists service day (SD) allocations. These are the upper limits allowed for services provided by a commercial operation. West side entry allocations include use for the Ansel Adams, John Muir, and Dinkey Lakes Wilderness. East side allocations are for the Ansel Adams and John Muir Wilderness. This allocation is derived from the Needs Assessment and determinations of resource capability.

Activity	West side entry Allocation (Service Days)	East side entry Allocation (Service Days)
Packstock supported	3, 300	13, 600
Backpacking	6, 400	2, 320
Non-traditional packstock	200	500
Mountaineering	0	1, 500
Winter Mountaineering/touring	500	1, 000
Credited educational	1, 750	1,000
Day Rides	0	3, 200
Total	11, 650	23,120

Managing Growth in Commercial Services:

Use the limiting factors worksheet outlined in the Needs Assessment and monitor for changes in resource capability.

Adjust use levels if monitoring of conditions shows changes over time, including both improvements and deteriorations to the conditions. If red concerns exist, reduce use levels. If red and yellow concerns are eliminated due to improved practices, behaviors, changes in use patterns, or other reasons, adjustments can be considered after appropriate environmental analysis.

Approve conditional temporary service day allocations of no more than 15% above commercial trailhead use levels per season. This allows for services that are provided to the non-traditional public (special populations, educational), where resource capability allows. Allow such increase for no more than two consecutive years before analysis to convert to priority use.

Recreation

Goals and Objectives

Manage the wilderness to allow for recreation use at levels that are sustainable to the ecological resources. Provide a range of opportunities for solitude across the wilderness landscape. Allow for recreation use in areas of popular destinations and insure reasonable access to the public. Insure that these areas do not expand or enlarge over time.

Management Direction

Establish three categories that will be used to manage recreational visitor use impacts.

Three categories will define the levels of acceptable social and ecological conditions affected by visitor use. They are mapped to roughly match current use levels. Adjustments were made to mitigate for limiting factors in resource conditions.

Table 2.9. Alternative 1 - Recreation Categories by Acreage and Percentage of Land base.

Category	Units	Total Acres	Percent
1	32	342,793	41
2	18	457,537	54
3	20	42,577	5

Table 2.10. Alternative 1 - Desired Condition of Recreation Categories

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Social	These areas provide for outstanding opportunities for solitude and are predominately free from evidence of human activities. Encounters with other visitors while traveling or camping are very infrequent. This environment offers a very high degree of challenge, self-reliance, and risk.	Highly maintained and constructed trail corridors will support access to popular destinations and travel routes. Trail junctions and scenic points will be likely for camping encounters and campsites may be within sight or sound of each other. Moderate to high occasions of solitude while traveling and camping outside the trail corridors will be likely.	In these areas, recreation use levels will be maintained to provide moderate levels of solitude. High opportunities for solitude will exist during the non-peak use season. During peak use season, opportunities for experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds and impacts of human activities will be moderate. The probability of encountering other visitors is moderate to high on the trail and at campsites.
Resource - general	A nearly unmodified natural environment characterizes the area. Ecological and natural processes are minimally affected by the action of users. Environmental impacts are low and restricted to minor losses of vegetation where camping occurs and along travel routes. Most impacts recover on an annual basis and are apparent to few visitors.	An essentially unmodified natural environment characterizes the area. In a few areas, where moderate levels of use will concentrate, natural conditions may be moderately affected by the actions of users. These impacts are mitigated with management presence. Impacts may persist from year to year and are apparent to a moderate number of visitors.	A mostly unmodified natural environment characterizes this area. Natural conditions may be affected by human use. Impacts to vegetation and soil often persist from year to year and are apparent to most visitors.
Campsites	Campsites are at low-density levels and show minor impacts that will rarely persist year to year.	Concentration of campsites is moderately high at trail junctions and popular destination points. The number of sites accommodates moderate use with no new sites forming over time. Campsites may occasionally be within sight and sound of others. Bare mineral soil may exist on some sites and may persist from year to year.	Concentration of campsites is moderately high at destinations. The number of sites accommodates peak use in order to prevent the formation of new sites. Bare mineral soil may exist on some sites and may persist from year to year.

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Vegetation/ Soil Conditions	There is very little vegetation loss or alteration of duff and litter layer by human use.	Moderate soil compaction and loss of vegetation, litter, and duff is expected at some camp areas and some areas used by packstock. Minimal erosion occurs on the disturbed sites.	Moderate soil compaction and loss of vegetation, litter, and duff is expected on many visitor created trails, camp areas, and areas used by livestock. Minimal erosion occurs on the disturbed sites and is mitigated to insure long-term impacts do not occur.
Riparian Areas	Riparian, lakeshore and stream channel conditions show no measurable degradation due to human uses.	Riparian, lakeshore, and stream channel conditions show a temporary change, which could be expected to persist from year to year at a few sites. These impacts should be mitigated and prevented from occurring if evidence of potential long-term impacts occurs.	Riparian, lakeshore and stream channels conditions show temporary changes, which could be expected to persist from year to year at some sites. Mitigation measures will be implemented to accommodate moderate levels of human recreation impacts.
Managerial	Management focuses on sustaining and enhancing the natural ecosystem. Signs may be present in very rare cases, for resource protection only. Management actions may occasionally include direct, on-site actions and site-specific regulations may be used in unusual cases where resources require higher levels of protection. Indirect methods of accomplishing management objectives will predominate with exceptions for insuring visitor use be maintained at low levels to insure impacts are contained and do not persist.	Management emphasizes sustaining and enhancing the natural ecosystem. Signing is minimal, providing for resource protection and direction at major trail intersections. Management action may frequently include direct, on-site actions and site-specific regulations may be used to meet management objectives for resource protection.	Management emphasizes sustaining and protecting natural conditions. Management actions will often be direct and management presence to mitigate visitor use impacts on the resource will be more noticeable. Campsites may need to be identified and delineated. Site-specific closures to camping, campfires, and site-specific regulations may be implemented. Signs used for resource protection will be acceptable in these areas. Moderate density of social trails will be present in destination camping areas. Maintain Forest Service presence to provide education contact and manage high levels of use.

Winter Use

Management Direction

Apply recreation use categories to maintain low use levels for winter. From approximately November to May, zone all areas Category 1 except for the entire drainages of Shepherd Pass, Rock Creek, Lakes Basin, Piute Pass, Bishop Creek, and from Agnew Meadow to Donahue Pass which will be zoned as Category 2.

Campfires

Management Direction

Continue existing closures to wood campfires (see map for reference).

Prohibit wood campfires in areas above 10,400 feet to protect sensitive ecosystems.

Close other areas to wood campfires as needed using the following criteria. The rating system is described in the campsite monitoring protocol, Appendix H.

Monitor impacted areas biannually for change, when 50 percent of campsites change from a “1”, “2”, or “3” to “4” rating, consider for closure to campfires.

Consider campfire closure in areas where more than half of the duff, litter, and fine woody material is removed to meet the intent of the regional soil quality standards for nutrient cycling.

Permit gas, propane, and multi-fuel stoves and heaters in fire closure areas.

Prohibit wood burning stoves (including “Zip” stoves), charcoal fires, packed in firewood, or fire pans within fire closure areas.

Campsite Conditions

Management Direction

Set campsites back 100 feet from water. In areas where terrain does not permit this, sites cannot be closer than 50 feet from water.

Consider designating campsites in popular destination areas.

Inform and educate visitors on proper campsite selection and camp behavior including “Leave No Trace” principles.

When occupied campsite or campsite condition, or campsite density standards are exceeded consider destination quotas or established campsite requirements or reductions in use.

Manage Trail Camp and Outpost Camp in the Mt. Whitney Zone as exceptions to the occupied campsite standards.

Close and rehabilitate sites when not in compliance with density standards or resource objectives, such as proximity to water or trails.

Emphasize use of established sites in recreation category 2 areas.

Maintain data records and monitor success of closures, rehabilitation, containment of the site, and other management actions.

Monitor for trends and changes in conditions and conduct periodic assessments. If condition class deteriorates more than one class, contain the site, mitigate impacts and maintain site character.

Monitor campsites for density and condition class ratings using the protocol identified in the Monitoring Plan. Rate the following factors: density of vegetation, total area of campsite, barren core, camp development, social trails, mutilations, distance to water and available firewood. (Appendix H).

Manage campsite density in accordance with the following standards.

Table 2.11. Alternative 1 - Campsite Density Standards

Recreation Use Category	Campsite Density Standards
Category 3	Density of campsites will be moderate to high at some destinations. Density of sites will not exceed 4 sites per acre. Most sites will be managed as condition class 3 and 4 sites, with signs of moderate impacts that will be mitigated with direct techniques. Some class 5 sites will be appropriate and monitored frequently and contained when changes are detected.
Category 2	Density of sites will be moderate, not to exceed 3 sites per acre. Many sites at destination locations will be condition class 3 with occasionally condition class 4. Most sites will be condition class 2.
Category 1	Density of sites will be low, not to exceed 1 site /acre. Most sites will be condition class 2 and 1. Very few class 3 sites will exist.

Occupied Campsites

Management Direction

Use the measurement of “occupied campsites” within site or sound of each other as the indicator for crowding and opportunities for solitude.

Identify benchmark points for monitoring occupied campsites.

Table 2.12. Alternative 1 - Standards for Occupied Campsites

Recreation Use Category	Number of occupied campsites within sight or sound
Category 1	0
Category 2	2
Category 3	4

Permit System and Quotas

Management Direction

Require wilderness permits year-round for overnight use and Mt. Whitney day use.

Establish quotas that are in effect year-round.

Recommend an advanced reservations period and publicize. This period will generally be May 15th to November 1st on east side entries and June 15th through September 15th on west side entries.

Modify the recommended reservation period, when monitoring indicates, and publish in public handouts.

Consider implementing destination quotas when standards are exceeded for crowding or when trailhead quotas do not satisfactorily control campsite conditions at interior destinations.

Table 2.13A. Alternative 1 - Limits and Quotas on Trailhead Use (*East side entries*)

Wilderness	Entry	Commercial Limit (Number of People)	Non-Commercial Quota (Number of People)
JM	Baker/Green	0	300/year
JM	Baxter Pass	20/year	10/day
AA	Beck Lake	15/day	10/day
JM	Big Pine – NF	20/day	24/day
JM	Big Pine – SF	4/day	8/day
JM	Birch Lake	5/year	5/day
JM	Bishop Pass	15/day	36/day
AA	Bloody Canyon	0	5/day
JM	Convict Lake	0	10/day
JM	Cottonwood Lakes	15 / day	60/day
AA	Deer Lake	10/day	10/day
JM	Duck Lake	15 day	40/day
AA	Fern Lake	75/year	5/day
AA	Fern/Yost	0	100/year
AA	Fish Creek	15/day	20/day
JM	Gable Lakes	0	150/year
JM	George Creek/Mt Williamson	0	6/day
AA	Gibbs	0	200/year
AA	Glacier Canyon	50/year	100/year
JM	Golden Trout Lakes	10/year	10/day
AA	High trail (PCT)	15/day	15/ day
JM	Hilton Lakes/Creek	15/day	10 /day
JM	Horton Lakes	50/year	5 / day
AA	John Muir Trail, North	10/day	10 / day

Wilderness	Entry	Commercial Limit (Number of People)	Non-Commercial Quota (Number of People)
JM	Kearsarge Pass	15/day	60 / day
JM	Lamarck Lakes	25/year	15 / day
JM	Laurel Lakes	200/year	5 / day
JM	Little Lakes Valley	5/day	24 / day
JM	McGee Creek	15/day	15 / day
JM	Meysan Lake	50/year	10 / day
AA	Minaret Lake	60/year	10 / day
JM	Mono Pass	10 /day	20 / day
JM	Mt Whitney Day Hike	0	100 / day
JM	Mt Whitney Overnight	0	75 / day
JM	North Fork Lone Pine Creek	5/day	10 / day
AA	Parker Creek	100 /year	300 / year
JM	Pine Creek	15/day	10/ day
JM	Piute Pass	15/day	30 / day
AA	Red Cones	5/day	20 / day
JM	Red Lake	0	300 / year
AA	River Trail	5/day	35 / day
AA	Rush Creek	20/day	34 / day
JM	Sabrina Lake	15/day	25 / day
JM	Sawmill Pass	25/year	10 / day
AA	Shadow Lake	15/day	30 /day
JM	Shepherd Pass	5/day	10 / day
JM	Taboose Pass	40/year	10 / day
JM	Tamarack Lakes	5/day	5 / day
JM	Treasure Lakes	30/year	12 /day
JM	Tuttle Creek	0	50/year
JM	Tyee/George Lake	15/year	10 /day
JM	Valentine Lake	0	5 /day

Table 2.13B. Alternative 1 - Limits and Quotas on Trailhead Use (*West side entries*)

Wilderness	Entry	Commercial Limit (Number of People)	Non-Commercial Quota (Number of People)
JM	Bear Creek/Bear Ridge	5/day	19/day
AA	Chiquito	10/day	25/day
DL	Cliff Lake	5/day	8/day
JM	Crown/Rancheria	5/day	8/day
JM	Devil's/Graveyard	5/day	16/day
JM	Florence	5/day	27/day
AA	Isberg	13/day	22/day
AA	Jackass/Norris	9/day	8/day
AA	Mammoth	5/day	21/day
JM	Maxon	7/day	16/day
AA	Miller/Cassidy	5/day	5/day
JM	Mono Creek	5/day	24/day
JM	Onion Springs	5/day	5/day
AA	Squaw Dome	5/day	5/day
AA	Walton	9/day	7/day
DL	Willow Mdw/Badger Flat	5/day	30/day
JM	Woodchuck	5/day	7/day

Day Use

Management Direction

Make changes to day use levels when concerns are identified at site-specific locations with public involvement and completion of an appropriate environmental analysis.

User-Created Trails

A user-created trail is any non-constructed path, created by the passage of visitors, which is discernible, and would not likely recover naturally within one year. User-created trails are not part of Forest Service trail inventories and do not receive funding for maintenance.

Goals and Objectives

Prevent the creation of user-created trails and limit the impacts associated with existing user-created trails, incorporating public involvement.

Emphasize managing or eliminating user-created trails in riparian, meadow, and streamside areas.

Use changes in user-created trails as an indicator of new or changed uses and impacts in areas not served by system trails.

Management Direction

In very rare cases, add user-created trail to Forest Transportation System (Trail Inventory), after completion of the appropriate environmental analysis. Maintain at appropriate designated service level.

Factors which, in combination, may indicate a need to add a user-created trail to the system, include:

Long-term and frequent access via a user-created trail by appropriate user types and numbers.

Incidental physical treatments or exterior non-physical controls are inadequate to address extensive resource impacts, however, impacts may be controlled through standard trail treatments.

Maintenance of the trail and mitigation of resource impacts would likely result in significant or ongoing efforts.

Existing user-created trails provide access consistent with management goals of a zone, but are substandard and causing resource impacts that are correctable with regular maintenance and standard trail treatments.

Recreation Stock Forage

Goals and Objectives

All rangelands are properly functioning and in satisfactory condition. Satisfactory condition is defined as being in a high seral ecological state, greater than or equal to fifty percent ($\geq 50\%$) similarity to Potential Natural Community and having stable soils with continuous, vegetative cover and rooting throughout available profile.

Proposed grazing standards allow sufficient herbaceous forage biomass to provide for high plant vigor, stream bank protection, and sediment entrapment on all meadow and riparian areas.

Management Direction

Consider an additional 10 percent in the standard under intensively managed grazing strategies on key areas that are in satisfactory condition if determined by an Interdisciplinary team that this additional use would not lead to a downward trend in resource conditions.

Stream bank trampling from livestock should not exceed 20 percent. Measure trampling damage that is evident at the end of season that could lead to degradation and/or impedes recovery (e.g. dead plants and chiseled soils). Use protocols identified in the *R5 Rangeland Analysis and Planning Guide (1997)* on selected key use stream reaches.

Use “range readiness” criteria as a primary technique to establish the annual season of packstock use on key areas. Criteria for determining appropriate grazing include:

- Snow course measurements and spring runoff,
- Soil firmness at designated key areas at various elevations,
- Growth development of key forage species at the designated key areas,
- Overall quantity and quality of available forage for the season,
- Site-specific management objectives and limited operating periods for sensitive wildlife species.

Use wilderness permits for administration of packstock use by private parties by incorporating the grazing allocation system and describing packstock use regulations.

Table 2.14. Alternative 1-Maximum Allowable Utilization Standards by Recreation Category

Landscape Zone	Rangeland Class	Vegetation Type	Category 3 Areas	Category 1 and 2 areas
Montane and Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	40% Use By Weight	30% Use By Weight
Montane and Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	20% Use By Weight	10% Use By Weight
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	20% Use Annual Leader Growth	10% Use Annual Leader Growth
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	10% Use Annual Leader Growth	5% Use Annual Leader Growth

Alternative 2

This alternative emphasizes preserving the ecological integrity of the wilderness while allowing for recreation use in such a way as to provide high opportunities for solitude and unconfined recreation. The entire wilderness will be managed consistently in regards to recreational use levels, allowing for no areas of concentrated recreation use and impacts. Use and impacts will be distributed across the landscape. Natural conditions and processes will be dominant and the landscape will appear to be untrammled by human activities so that the wilderness character and influences are predominating. Special provisions will be limited to the least intrusive and minimal needs of the general public.

This alternative addresses a number of issues that some publics expressed with the Proposed Action. These include: “don’t zone wilderness”, “manage commercial use consistent with non-commercial use”, “reduce use in heavily used areas”, “allow for more opportunities for solitude”, “changes in party size” and “provide more protection for natural resources.” This alternative provides for reductions in allocations to commercial users, one consistent management scheme across the entire planning area, a different method for restricting campfires, reductions in the trailhead quotas due to limiting factors, reductions in available campsite locations, reduction in the allowable party size for cross-country travel and some trails designated as hiker-only.

Commercial Activities

Goals and Objectives

All outfitting/guiding will meet wilderness objectives and be consistent with uses and management of the general public. In areas where limiting factors are identified, commercial uses will be reduced.

Management Direction

Allow growth for commercial use only outside of the planning area.

Commercial operators will compete with non-commercial users for established quotas.

Continue existing O/G use of the wilderness under SUP, subject to allocations by types of activities as identified below: These allocations are based on the Needs Assessment and are consistent with overall desired conditions for the stated goals, objectives, management direction in this alternative.

Table 2.15. Alternative 2 - Commercial Allocations in Service Days

Activity	West side entry Allocation (Service Days)	East side entry Allocation (Service Days)
Packstock supported	2,500	10,000
Backpacking	5,000	1,500
Non-traditional packstock	500	2,000
Mountaineering	0	1,500
Ski Mountaineering/touring	0	750
Credited educational	2,000	1,000
Day Rides	0	2,000
Total	10,000	18,750

Consider commercial uses for restriction and regulation first whenever conflicts occur between non-commercial and commercial uses.

Require all commercial operations to meet spatial and temporal controls commensurate with the non-commercial public in the following manner:

Wilderness permits will be issued by the Forest Service for all trips originating on National Forest System lands.

There will be only one quota; commercial and non-commercial users will compete for the space available within that quota.

The reservation and wilderness permit system will be managed the same way for all users.

In addition to wilderness permit requirements, all full service, packstock activities, including traveling trips and continuous hire will be managed through planned and approved itineraries and will include the designation of campsites.

All ski mountaineering will be approved by itinerary, and wilderness permits will be obtained in the same manner as the general public.

All commercial packstock must stay on designated trails, except where authorized to access campsites and grazing areas.

Quotas for commercial use are described in the section below, Permits and Quotas.

Recreation

Goals and Objectives

Recreation use will be managed to achieve high quality opportunities for solitude and unconfined types of recreation. Restrictions on use will protect the experiential values and the ecological resources but be minimized for protection of all wilderness values. Tradeoffs between resource protection and visitation will emphasize resource protection.

Campfires

Management Direction

Prohibit wood campfires in areas above 10,000-foot elevation in the northern portion of the planning area and 10,400 feet in the southern portion. The line dividing the two elevation zones runs generally east to west following the northern boundary of the Middle Owens Valley Watershed to where it meets the northern boundary of the Upper South Fork San Joaquin Watershed known as Glacier Divide; then north boundary of Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park and continues west along the southern boundary of the Middle South Fork San Joaquin Watershed (see map).

Maintain existing site-specific closures to wood campfires. The following criteria will be used to identify additional site-specific closures:

- Define camp areas by identifying the concentrated area of campsites and delineating a ¼ mile buffer around that area.
- Monitor campsite conditions with the form and protocol established in the Monitoring Plan.
- When 50 percent of campsites rate above a “4” factor for firewood availability the area will be closed to wood campfires.

Permit gas, propane and multi-fuel stoves and heaters in fire closure areas.

Prohibit wood burning stoves (including “Zip” stoves), charcoal fires, packed in firewood, or fire pans within fire closure areas.

Campsite Management

Management Direction

Establish destination quotas when standards for occupied campsites are exceeded in more than 10 percent of a season’s sample for more than two years in a row.

Use number of appropriate sites inventoried at the destination, and the standards below, as a guideline for determining the quota.

Minimize the number of campsites and camp areas to accommodate appropriate dispersal of use.

Locate campsites no closer than 100 feet from water, no exceptions.

Monitor campsites using protocol established in Monitoring Plan (Appendix H).

Very low densities of campsites will occur. Wilderness wide, manage for no more than 2 sites per acre.

In any given destination area, there will be no more than 60% condition class 1 and condition class 2 sites, and no more than 40% class 3 and 4 sites. There will be no more than 1% class 5 campsites. Use the monitoring protocol established in Appendix H.

The standard for occupied campsites will be 3 sites within sight or sound wilderness wide. When standard is exceeded more than 10% of samples, consider designated campsites or destination quotas.

Manage Trail Camp and Outpost Camp as exceptions to the occupied campsite standards. The standard for Trail Camp and Outpost will be 10 sites within sight or sound of each other.

Permit System and Quotas

Goals and Objectives

All users will compete equally for access to wilderness through a system of quotas. Quotas can be applied to trailheads or destinations.

Management Direction

Require wilderness permits year-round.

Institute one quota that includes both commercial and non-commercial use. Market demands will determine distribution between commercial and non-commercial users.

Commercial operators must book permits and reservations in the client's name.

All changed or cancelled reservations are subject to a fee to reduce inappropriate bookings.

Quotas will be in effect year-round. The recommended reservation period will be established and published yearly, but is generally between May 15th to November 1st on east side entries and June 15th through September 15th on west side entries.

Modify the recommended reservation period when monitoring indicates the need and publish in public handouts.

Implement destination quotas when standards are exceeded for occupied campsites or campsite conditions or campsite density at interior destinations not easily controlled by trailhead quotas.

Establish winter quotas when use levels trend upward more than 10 percent for two consecutive years.

Table 2.16A. Alternative 2 - Daily Trailhead Quota for Non Commercial and Commercial Use Entry (*East side entries*)

Wilderness	Entry	Commercial and non-commercial Quota (People per Day)
JM	Baker/Green	10
JM	Baxter Pass	5
AA	Beck Lake	20
JM	Big Pine – NF	24
JM	Big Pine – SF	12
JM	Birch Lake	5
JM	Bishop Pass	36
AA	Bloody Canyon	5
JM	Convict Lake	5
JM	Cottonwood Lakes	40
AA	Deer Lake	10
JM	Duck Lake	30
AA	Fern Lake	10
AA	Fern/Yost	5
AA	Fish Creek	20
JM	Gable Lakes	5
JM	George Creek	5
AA	Gibbs	5
AA	Glacier Canyon	5
AA	High trail (PCT)	20
JM	Hilton Lakes	15
JM	Horton Lakes	5
JM	John Muir Trail, North	10
JM	Kearsarge Pass	40
JM	Lamarck Lakes	10
JM	Laurel Lakes	5
JM	Little Lakes Valley	24
JM	McGee Creek	20
JM	Meysan Lake	10
AA	Minaret Lake	10
JM	Mono Pass	20
JM	Mt Whitney Day Hike	50
JM	Mt Whitney Overnight	40
JM	North Fork Lone Pine Creek	15
AA	Parker Creek	5
JM	Pine Creek	20
JM	Piute Pass	30
AA	Red Cones	20
JM	Red Lake	5

Wilderness	Entry	Commercial and non-commercial Quota (People per Day)
AA	River Trail	20
AA	Rush Creek	25
JM	Sabrina Lake	25
JM	Sawmill Pass	10
AA	Shadow Lake	20
JM	Shepherd Pass	10
JM	Taboose Pass	10
JM	Tamarack Lakes	5
JM	Treasure Lakes	10
JM	Tuttle Creek	5
JM	Tyee/George Lake	5
JM	Valentine Lake	5

Table 2.16B. Alternative 2 - Daily Trailhead Quota for Non Commercial and Commercial Use Entry (*West side entries*)

Wilderness	Entry	Commercial and non-commercial Quota (People per Day)
JM	Bear Creek/Bear Ridge	12/day
AA	Chiquito	16/day
DL	Cliff Lake	10/day
JM	Crown/Rancheria	9/day
JM	Devil's/Graveyard	20/day
AA	Fernandez	30/day
JM	Florence	40/day
AA	Isberg	21/day
AA	Jackass/Norris	14/day
AA	Mammoth	5/day
JM	Maxon	23/day
AA	Miller/Cassidy	104/year
JM	Mono Creek	26/day
JM	Onion Springs	7/day
AA	Squaw Dome	104/year
AA	Walton	208/year
DL	Willow Mdw/Badger Flat	31/day
JM	Woodchuck	8/day

Party Size

Management Direction

Limit party size to 15 persons and 25 head of stock per party; limit party size for cross-country travel to 8 people, 8 head of stock. Cross-country travel is defined as ½ mile from a designated trail.

Authorize camps, grazing areas, or traditional routes when determined to be necessary for access at the discretion of the appropriate line officer.

System Trails

Goals and Objectives

Provide the minimum trail network and maintenance standards necessary to meet the objectives of dispersal, solitude, and resource condition.

Management Direction

Monitor and adjust maintenance levels to reflect the minimum access needs for user types and numbers.

Identify significant resource impacts and locations when conducting routine trail condition surveys.

Give priority to riparian and aquatic resources and overall watershed condition when making decisions for trail maintenance, reconstruction, and relocation projects.

Emphasize trail relocation (as compared to repairing in place) away from sensitive areas, such as meadows, riparian environs, known TES populations or habitat, heritage resources or others when mitigating resource impacts during trail work.

Remove trails from inventory which are causing significant resource impacts and do not contribute to meeting the objectives for the area that it accesses.

No new trails will be constructed or added to the system.

Actively restore and/or stabilize trails that have been abandoned (due to realignment or closure) that will not heal naturally. Some examples include abandoned trails that significantly alter local hydrology, deeply compacted soils, and sites with continued inappropriate traffic, increased entrenchment or widening.

Designate the following trails as hiker-only, from the trailhead to Sierra Crest:

- Shepherd Pass Trail
- Taboose Pass Trail
- Sawmill Pass Trail
- Baxter Pass Trail

Consider other trails for designation as “Hiker-only,” using appropriate NEPA and public involvement process.

User-created Trails

Goals and Objectives

Minimize the intensity of direct resource effects of user-created trails to protect resources and intensive resource impacts of recreational use.

Management Direction

Accept user-created trails that have minimal direct effects on resources, so as to allow greater dispersal of visitors.

Eliminate user-created trails when:

- a. An existing system trail or more appropriate user-created trail provides similar access.
- b. The user-created trail is causing direct, identifiable impacts to TEPS species or habitat or to heritage resources or watershed condition.
- c. The trail is not needed to provide dispersal of visitors.

Emphasize administrative controls (as compared to physical treatments) to disperse use and meet area objectives for solitude and resource condition.

User-created trails will not be added to the forest trail system.

Day Use

Goals and Objectives

Day use will be managed at levels that allow for use to provide high opportunities for solitude and unconfined recreation. Use and impacts will be distributed across the landscape.

Management Direction

Conduct analysis to establish use levels commensurate with goals and objectives after completion of day use surveys. Reduce day use where crowding and congestion is occurring, cap day use where levels are determined to be acceptable.

Establish day use permit system and implement quotas as established above.

Establish a year-round quota period. The recommended reservation period will be established and published annually, but is generally between May 15th to November 1st on east side entries and June 15th through September 15th on west side entries.

Recreation Stock Forage

Goals and Objectives

All rangelands are properly functioning and in satisfactory condition. Satisfactory Condition is defined as being in a very high seral ecological state, greater than or equal to 75 percent ($\geq 75\%$) similarity to Potential Natural Community and having stable soils with continuous vegetative cover and rooting throughout available profile.

Management Direction

Proposed grazing standards allow sufficient herbaceous forage biomass to provide for very high plant vigor, stream bank protection, and sediment entrapment on all meadow and riparian areas.

Intensively managed grazing strategies at higher utilization levels would not be encouraged. Existing practices (i.e. permanent pastures) would be phased out.

Stream bank trampling from livestock should not exceed 10 percent using monitoring protocols similar to Alternative 1.

Range readiness – Readiness criteria would be similar to Alternative 1.

Administration of packstock use by private parties would be similar to Alternative 1.

Table 2.17. Alternative 2 - Maximum Allowable Utilization Standards for All Wilderness Areas

Landscape Zone	Rangeland Class	Vegetation Type	All Wilderness
Montane & Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	20% Use By Weight
Montane & Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	10% Use Annual Leader Growth
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	10% Use By Weight
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	5% Use Annual Leader Growth

Alternative 3 – No Action

This alternative would continue existing policy and direction. The current Forest Plans for the Inyo and Sierra NFs would continue to provide overall wilderness direction. The existing John Muir and Minarets Wilderness Plans would continue to provide direction where not superseded by their respective Forest Plans. Any additional changes would take place through another analysis and forest plan amendment process.

Commercial Activities

Goals and Objectives

None are identified under the current Forest Plans.

Management Direction

Maintain current service day allocations by activities or for trailheads.

Backpacking O/Gs must obtain wilderness permits through the quota system. Pack stations and mountain guides affected by the 1996 Decision Memo continue to write their own wilderness permits.

Increase and/or reduce service day allocations through case-by-case decisions, assessing the need for conducting outfitting and guiding and assessing resource capability.

Administer site-specific restrictions, practices, and guidelines for access through the SUP and associated annual operating plans.

Table 2.18. Alternative 3 - Allocations to Commercial Activities

Activity	West side Allocation (Service Days)	East side Allocation (Service Days)
Packstock supported	2,900	18,432
Backpacking	6,300	2,104
Mountain Guiding / Winter Mountaineering	0	2,218
Credited Educational	0	0
Non traditional packstock	200	0
Day hiking	0	50
Day rides	1000	7,291*
Total	10,400	30,095

*Only 6 of the 10 pack stations have specific day ride allocations. Some of the day ride allocation is within the first activity listed, Packstock supported.

Campfires

Management Direction

No campfire elevational closures will be in effect.

Specific site closures to wood campfires will remain in place based upon criteria in current direction.

Campsite Management

Management Direction

Manage some areas with high campsite density per wilderness manager and ranger case-by-case decisions.

Manage campsite conditions on case-by-case basis.

Locate campsites 100 feet from water where terrain permits and in no cases closer than 25 feet.

Permit System and Quotas

Management Direction

Require wilderness permits year-round.

Maintain current trailhead quotas

Table 2.19A. Alternative 3 - Trailhead Quotas (*East side entries*)

Wilderness	Entry	Quota (People)
JM	Baker/Green	None
JM	Baxter Pass	15/day
AA	Beck Lake	25/day
JM	Big Pine – NF	24/day
JM	Big Pine – SF	12/day
JM	Birch Lake	None
JM	Bishop Pass	36/day
AA	Bloody Canyon	None
JM	Convict Lake	None
JM	Cottonwood Lakes	60/day
AA	Deer Lake	10/day
JM	Duck Lake	40/day
AA	Fern Lake	20/day
AA	Fern/Yost	None

Wilderness	Entry	Quota (People)
AA	Fish Creek	25/day
JM	Gable Lakes	None
JM	George Creek/Mt Williamson	6/day
AA	Gibbs	None
AA	Glacier Canyon	None
JM	Golden Trout Lakes	25/day
AA	High trail (PCT)	25/day
JM	Hilton Lakes/Creek	20/day
JM	Horton Lakes	None
AA	John Muir Tr north	10/day
JM	Kearsarge Pass	60/day
JM	Lamarck Lakes	16/day
JM	Laurel Lakes	None
JM	Little Lakes Valley	24/day
JM	McGee Creek	24/day
JM	Meysan Lake	15/day
AA	Minaret Lake	10/day
JM	Mono Pass	24/day
JM	Mt Whitney Day Hike	150/day
JM	Mt Whitney Overnight	50/day
JM	North Fork Lone Pine Creek	15/day
AA	Parker Creek	None
JM	Pine Creek	20/day
JM	Piute Pass	32/day
AA	Red Cones	25/day
JM	Red Lake	None
AA	River Trail	35/day
AA	Rush Creek	34/day
JM	Sabrina Lake	28/day
JM	Sawmill Pass	15/day
AA	Shadow Lake	30/day
JM	Shepherd Pass	15/day
JM	Taboose Pass	15/day
JM	Tamarack Lakes	None
JM	Treasure Lakes	12/day
JM	Tuttle Creek	None
JM	Tyee/George Lake	None
JM	Valentine Lake	None

Table 2.19B. Alternative 3 - Trailhead Quotas (*West side entries*)

Wilderness	Trailhead	Quota (People)
JM	Bear Creek/Bear Ridge	30/day
AA	Chiquito/Quartz	35/day
DL	Cliff Lake	none
JM	Crown/Rancheria	none
JM	Devil's/Graveyard	24/day
AA	Fernandez	36/day
JM	Florence	72/day
AA	Isberg	33/day
AA	Jackass/Norris	15/day
AA	Mammoth	25/day
JM	Maxon	75/day
AA	Miller/Cassidy	none
JM	Mono Creek	36/day
JM	Onion Springs	none
AA	Squaw Dome	none
AA	Walton	15/day
DL	Willow Mdw/Badger Flat	none
JM	Woodchuck	none

Maintain current reservation period dates, May 15 to November 1 for Mt. Whitney and the last Friday in June to September 15 on all other east side trails. Dates for the quota period can change on a case-by-case basis when monitoring indicates that the quotas are being reached or exceeded at the discretion of the Line Officer.

The Forest Service, O/Gs, and other cooperating partners will issue wilderness permits.

Party Size

Management Direction

Limit party size to 15 persons and 25 head of stock per party. The existing Forest Order will guide exceptions to the party size. (Forest Orders 04-96-2 / 15-92-1 / 13-95-3)

User-created Trails

Management Direction

Manage user-created trails when resource problems are present.

Recreation Stock Forage

Goals and Objectives

All rangelands are properly functioning and in satisfactory condition. Satisfactory Condition is defined as having a moderate forage value rating, composed of preferred and desirable forage plants, greater than or equal to 50 percent ($\geq 50\%$) of site complex -and- having stable soils with continuous, vegetative cover and rooting throughout available profile.

Management Direction

Proposed grazing standards allow sufficient herbaceous forage biomass to provide for moderate plant vigor, stream bank protection, and sediment entrapment on most meadow and riparian areas.

Intensively managed grazing strategies at higher utilization levels would be encouraged. Range facilities (i.e. pasture & drift fence) would be managed to current standards. Existing Packstock Management Plans would be updated and incorporated into applicable special use permits. The utilization standards would be applied according to vegetation types as described in these existing plans and the *R5 Range Analysis Handbook (1969)* using the key species and key area concept. These standards are based on total utilization or that percent of use of current production, which is measured at the end of growing season.

Stream bank trampling would not be used as a management standard unless required as a conservation practice in biological opinions for federally listed species in designated areas.

Range readiness – Readiness criteria would not be used as a primary technique in establishing the annual season of packstock use on key areas. Key areas could be grazed upon being accessible.

Administration of packstock use by private parties would not be implemented under this alternative. Environmental awareness would continue to emphasize proper management and handling of packstock.

Table 2.20. Alternative 3 - Maximum Allowable Utilization Standards for All Wilderness Areas:

Landscape Zone	Rangeland Class	Vegetation Type	All Wilderness
Montane & Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	55% Use By Weight
Montane & Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	45% Use Annual Leader Growth
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	45% Use By Weight
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	35% Use Annual Leader Growth

Alternative 4

In this alternative, the wilderness would be managed to maximize recreational uses and remain accessible to all users. Recreational uses will be maintained at levels that recognize historic traditions and uses. Management will accommodate use and growth in ways that are compatible with the wilderness character and natural resource values of wilderness. Restriction will be minimized to allow for unconfined types of recreation. The wilderness will be managed with standards for two categories of recreation use; trailed and the trail-less. Human activity will be apparent in both the social and ecological environment.

Commercial Activities

Goals and Objectives

Commercial service providers play an integral goal in management of the wilderness resource. They meet public needs by providing education of visitors, resource protection and are partners in meeting management objectives. In order to provide these public needs, commercial services will be allowed flexibility in their operations.

Management Direction

Continue current service day allocations. Monitor for changes in actual use.

Maintain a pool for non-use by activity that will be made available for temporary allocations. This allows flexibility in operations on a year-to-year basis.

Allow for growth in commercial services on a case-by-case basis, where limiting factors do not exist after the completion of the appropriate environmental analysis.

Utilize annual operating plans as the primary tool for managing uses and activities.

Implement, where necessary, designated campsites and approved itineraries through annual operating plans.

Table 2.21. Alternative 4 - Commercial Allocations

Activity	West Side Entry Allocation (Service Days)	East Side Entry Allocation (Service Days)
Packstock supported	6,500	18,000
Backpacking	10,000	2,300
Mountain Guiding / Winter Mountaineering	500	4,000
Nontraditional Packstock	250	500
Credited Educational	2,000	2,000
Day Hiking	250	50
Day rides (stock)	500	5,000
Total	20,000	29,650

Wilderness permits can be obtained either through authorized outlets or the Forest Service offices.

Certain commercial service providers will be certified as outlets for issuing wilderness permits. Outlets will have authorities based on a certification process. Protocol will be established for issuing permits, reporting, and tracking use.

Control limits on numbers of permits issued through annual operating plans.

Monitor wilderness permit issuance for quality control.

Recreation

Goals and Objectives

Recreation use will be managed using a trail/ trail-less concept for applying standards. There will be a 1-mile corridor, ½ mile on each side of all system trails, that will be one management zone, and the rest of the wilderness will be managed as a trail-less zone.

Campfires

Management Direction

Minimize closures to campfires.

Monitor for firewood availability utilizing campsite protocol in the Monitoring Plan (Appendix H).

Maintain existing closures to wood campfires where conditions for firewood availability are low.

Consider lifting campfire closures where conditions for firewood availability show an upward trend.

Consider implementing a closure to wood gathering where conditions show a downward trend in firewood availability.

Firewood may be packed into wilderness and used wherever needed.

Firewood, charcoal, propane, solid fuel, and gas all may be brought into the wilderness. Proper standards for containment of fires may include, but are not limited to, fire pans, stoves, and other self-contained methods.

Campsite Conditions

Management Direction

Provide a range of opportunities for solitude for visitors to the planning area. Natural dispersal of use through normal use patterns will be reflected in management actions.

Occupied Campsite Standards

Management Direction

Manage Trail and Outpost Camps as exceptions to the occupied campsite standards.

Locate campsites in no case closer than 25 feet from any water body or source.

Table 2.22. Alternative 4 - Occupied Campsites Allowed

Zone	Allowable campsites within sight or sound **
Trailed Areas	10
Trail-less	3

***Standards for occupied campsites will not be exceeded more than 20 percent of samples.*

Campsite Density

Management Direction

In **trailed areas**, maintain campsite density to the following standard:

Density of campsites will be moderate to high at some destinations. Density of sites will not exceed 10 sites per acre. Most sites will be contained as condition class 3 and 4 sites, with some class 5 sites.

In **trail-less** areas, maintain campsite density to the following standard:

- Density of sites will be moderate, not to exceed 4 sites per acre.
- Many sites at destination locations will be condition class 3 with an occasional condition class 4.
- Most sites will be condition class 2.

Permit System and Quotas

Management Direction

Require wilderness permits year-round.

The Forest Service, Outfitter Guides, and other cooperating partners will issue wilderness permits. Criteria will be established for monitoring and implementation of the permit system.

Trailhead quotas will be in effect between June 15th and September 15th for all trails other than Mt. Whitney. Mt. Whitney quotas will be in effect from May 15th to November 1st.

Maintain the existing system for reserving permits, until conditions warrant changes to quota dates or destination quotas.

Table 2.23A. Alternative 4 - Trailhead Entry Quotas (*East side entires*)

Wilderness	Entry	Quota (People)
JM	Baker/Green	None
JM	Baxter Pass	15/day
AA	Beck Lake	25/day
JM	Big Pine – NF	24/day
JM	Big Pine – SF	12/day
JM	Birch Lake	None
JM	Bishop Pass	36/day
AA	Bloody Canyon	None
JM	Convict Lake	None
JM	Cottonwood Lakes	60/day
AA	Deer Lake	10/day
JM	Duck Lake	40/day
AA	Fern Lake	20/day
AA	Fern/Yost	None
AA	Fish Creek	25/day
JM	Gable Lakes	None
JM	George Creek/Mt Williamson	6/day
AA	Gibbs	None
AA	Glacier Canyon	None
JM	Golden Trout Lakes	25/day
AA	High trail (PCT)	25/day
JM	Hilton Lakes/Creek	20/day
JM	Horton Lakes	None
AA	John Muir Trail, North	10/day
JM	Kearsarge Pass	60/day
JM	Lamarck Lakes	16/day

Wilderness	Entry	Quota (People)
JM	Laurel Lakes	None
JM	Little Lakes Valley	24/day
JM	McGee Creek	24/day
JM	Meysan Lake	15/day
AA	Minaret Lake	10/day
JM	Mono Pass	24/day
JM	Mt Whitney Day Hike	150/day
JM	Mt Whitney Overnight	50/day
JM	North Fork Lone Pine Creek	15/day
AA	Parker Creek	None
JM	Pine Creek	20/day
JM	Piute Pass	32/day
AA	Red Cones	25/day
JM	Red Lake	None
AA	River Trail	35/day
AA	Rush Creek	34/day
JM	Sabrina Lake	28/day
JM	Sawmill Pass	15/day
AA	Shadow Lake	30/day
JM	Shepherd Pass	15/day
JM	Taboose Pass	15/day
JM	Tamarack Lakes	None
JM	Treasure Lakes	12/day
JM	Tuttle Creek	None
JM	Tyee/George Lake	None
JM	Valentine Lake	None

Table 2.23B. Trailhead entry Quotas (*West side entires*)

Wilderness	Trailhead	Quota (People)
JM	Bear Creek/Bear Ridge	30/day
AA	Chiquito	35/day
DL	Cliff Lake	600/year
JM	Crown/Rancheria	600/year
JM	Devil's/Graveyard	24/day
AA	Fernandez	39/day
JM	Florence	72/day
AA	Isberg	35/day
AA	Jackass/Norris	17/day
AA	Mammoth	26/day
JM	Maxon	75/day
AA	Miller/Cassidy	200/year
JM	Mono Creek	36/day
JM	Onion Springs	500/year
AA	Squaw Dome	200/year
AA	Walton	16/day
DL	Willow Mdw/Badger Flat	57/day
JM	Woodchuck	600/year

System Trails

Goals and Objectives

Manage system trails to accommodate current, historic, and anticipated user types and numbers, providing maximum access and ease of travel.

Management Direction

Upgrade trail conditions to maximize recreational use and access.

Reduce resource impacts emphasizing constructed trail features, rather than administrative controls.

Construct new trails and/or add trails to the forest inventory to meet changing demands when opportunities arise.

Meysan Lakes Trail and the Mt Whitney Trail will remain designated as “Hiker-only” trails, other than stock use for emergencies and administrative need.

User-created Trails

Goals and Objectives

Provide unconfined travel opportunities and maximum access to the wilderness area.

Management Direction

Do not restrict use on user-created trails.

Reduce resource impacts from user-created trails, using physical treatments and structures.

Emphasize placing user-created trails on Forest Transportation System (Trail Inventory), where this enhances access and ability to mitigate resource impacts.

Implement physical or administrative controls regarding user-created trails only if significant problems are identified.

Recreation Stock Forage

Goals and Objectives

All rangelands are properly functioning and in satisfactory condition. Satisfactory condition is defined as having a high forage value rating, composed of preferred and desirable forage plants, greater than or equal to 76 percent ($\geq 76\%$) of site complex and having stable soils with continuous, vegetative cover and rooting throughout available profile.

Management Direction

Proposed grazing standards allow sufficient herbaceous forage biomass to provide for moderate plant vigor, stream bank protection, and sediment entrapment on all meadow and riparian areas.

Intensively managed grazing strategies at higher utilization levels would not be encouraged. Range facilities (i.e. pasture & drift fence) would be managed to current standards.

Stream bank trampling from livestock should not exceed 10 percent in areas occupied by sensitive aquatic species using monitoring protocols similar to Alternative 1. It should not exceed 20 percent in all other areas.

Range readiness – Readiness criteria would not be used as a primary technique in establishing the annual season of packstock use on key areas. Key areas could be grazed upon being accessible.

Administration of packstock use by private parties would be similar to Alternative 1. However, emphasis would be placed on environmental awareness rather than compliance with standards and guidelines.

Table 2.24. Alternative 4 - Maximum Allowable Utilization Standards

Landscape Zone	Rangeland Class	Vegetation Type	All Wilderness
Montane & Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	45% Use By Weight
Montane & Subalpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	35% Use Annual Leader Growth
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Herbaceous Perennials	35% Use By Weight
Alpine	Meadow, Riparian & Upland	Shrubs & Trees	25% Use Annual Leader Growth

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Study

Federal agencies are required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives, and briefly discuss the reasons for eliminating any alternatives that were not developed in detail (40 CFR 1502.14). Public comments received in response to the original scoping and the DEIS comment period did not explicitly describe alternatives based on the components upon which this RDEIS is organized.

Many ideas have been suggested and explored in arriving at the current alternatives considered in detail. Various components such as mitigation measures, changes to quotas and allocations, more restrictions on commercial use, less restrictions on commercial use. Addressing each of these factors individually would create an unmanageably large number of alternatives that would not be helpful to the decision maker or the public. Also, some components have been outside the scope of providing new management direction for the planning area, already represented by one or more of the alternatives considered in detail, or determined to be components that would cause unnecessary environmental harm. Therefore, a number of alternatives were considered but dismissed from detailed consideration for reasons described below.

Alternatives from the original DEIS that have been eliminated from further study in this RDEIS include:

DEIS Alternative 2 – Emphasize Pristine Condition

Theme- This alternative would maximize the amount of pristine wilderness condition. Emphasis would be placed on natural physical and biological processes: an environment that is self-sustaining and requiring minimal “internal” managerial presence over the long-term. Minimizing the degree of human based ecosystem disturbances would be accomplished by regulating the amount and type of human use permitted within the planning area. Users would experience a high degree of solitude. Opportunity classes would be allocated to emphasize this pristine character.

Alternative 2 in this RDEIS replaced this alternative; the new alternative has nearly the same emphasis, but does not use the opportunity class system to implement it. This alternative has no system of zoning and applies standards and guidelines universally across the landscape.

DEIS Alternative 3 – Emphasize Recreational Opportunities

Theme – In this alternative evidence of human activity would be apparent on both the physical and biological environment. Human intervention and use would be allowed to the extent permissible under wilderness laws and policies. Users would experience a high probability of encountering other. Opportunity Classes would be allocated to emphasize recreational activity.

Alternative 4 in the RDEIS replaced this alternative; the new alternative has nearly the same

emphasis, but does not use the opportunity class system. Alternative 4 uses a system of trail and trail-less zoning to manage use.

DEIS Alternative 4 – Current Use With Opportunity Classes

Theme – This alternative proposes to allocate opportunity classes to best approximate current use and management direction as prescribed by the Land and Resource Management Plans. An exact match is not possible since there are significant differences between the two LRMPs in wilderness management direction. This alternative would apply a consistent approach throughout the planning area through the application of opportunity classes and uniform management direction. Deviation from current LRMP will vary depending on how close the LRMP direction matches opportunity class standards and management direction.

This alternative was not considered in the RDEIS because opportunity class is not being used as a management system in this wilderness planning process.

DEIS Alternative 5 – Forest Service Preferred

Theme – This alternative offers a balance of recreational use with opportunities for solitude and pristine conditions. Human based ecosystem disturbances would be balanced with retention of a pristine wilderness condition. Opportunity classes would be allocated to offer the user a variety of wilderness experiences.

This alternative was not considered in detail because, when it was compared to the range of alternatives in the RDEIS it was found that all of the components of the alternative were covered in one of the other alternatives. Opportunity class was not considered since it is not being used in this wilderness planning process.

Back Country Horsemen - Alternative 5, submitted in response to the RDEIS

This alternative was reviewed by members of the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) and compared to the existing range of alternatives displayed in the RDEIS as well as existing laws, regulations, Manual and Handbook direction and LRMP direction. The IDT determined that all of the elements of Back Country Horsemen's alternative were either addressed in one of the alternatives or existing direction. A detailed review of the analysis is available in the planning record.

Comparison of Alternatives

Physical Environment

Soils

Generally, implementation of regional soil quality standards and BMPs for protection of water quality is expected to maintain long-term soil quality and productivity. However each alternative proposes a range of management activities and allowable uses that could impact soil to varying degrees. These alternatives are compared using the concept of relative risk of impacting soils under the various management schemes.

Alternatives 1 and 1 – Modified provide a strong degree of protection and also concentrate use so that areas can be managed more effectively to minimize soil impacts. Alternative 2 provides fewer measures to concentrate impacts than Alternatives 1 and 1 – Modified, and therefore may result in more moderate impacts to soils over a larger area. Moderate impacts are less likely to exceed regional soil quality standards. All three alternatives have measures to improve the current situation and reduce existing impacts as well as to provide consistent direction to help prevent future impacts. Similar management direction is not included in Alternatives 3 and 4. Alternative 3 has the least degree of protection for soils and poses the greatest risk for impacting certain soil communities and high use areas.

Water Resources

Overall, Alternative 2 provides the greatest degree of protection and the least amount of risk to water quality. Alternatives 1 and 1 – Modified also provide a strong degree of protection and concentrate use so that areas can be managed more effectively to minimize water quality impacts. All three alternatives have measures to improve the current situation and reduce existing impacts as well as to provide consistent direction to help prevent future impacts. Similar management direction is not included in Alternatives 3 and 4. Alternative 4 has the least degree of protection and poses the highest risk of impacting water quality.

Biological Environment

All Wildlife Species

Direct Effects of Human Disturbance

The ability to compare the effects of human disturbance levels by alternative on the diverse wildlife community of species in wilderness is a qualitative assessment at best. As explained in the environmental consequences section, this aspect of analysis is compounded by the many combinations of wildlife and human encounters that may occur, including an inability to forecast how any given human or animal will react. As with other aspects of wilderness management, increased use of wilderness does not necessarily correlate with increased impacts since impacts

may occur at low levels of use where additional use would not change the outcome. All it takes is one negative encounter with some species to cause a nest failure for instance. The best that could be said is with increased human use of wilderness, whether at one place or more dispersed, one can expect an increased probability of human-wildlife encounters, some of which may be detrimental to one party or another. At present, research is needed to come up with evidence that human disturbance from implementation of any alternative will result in a loss of viability for species within the planning area. The indirect effects of implementation of any alternative such as habitat modification including localized losses in nesting and hiding cover as well as foraging substrate from trails, camps, firewood collection, are not expected to result in a loss of viability for species within the planning area.

Alternative 2 provides for the lowest levels of recreational use in wilderness. If one assumes less people in wilderness reduces the probability of human disturbance events then this alternative may be a better solution than the other four. The limitation of this line of reasoning is alternative 2 may actually disperse human disturbance into areas currently receiving less human use. An even dispersion of disturbance over the wilderness is not necessarily of benefit to some wildlife species such as the wolverine that seems to need areas remote from human activity. Alternatives 1-Modified, and 1 will essentially maintain the status quo. This could be beneficial since wildlife have probably habituated to this level of disturbance over time. Areas that are currently receiving light human use would continue to do so and wildlife species requiring more remote habitats would continue to find these areas. Alternatives 3 and 4 allow for increases in human recreation use. This would occur over a longer period of time as use gradually increased. Human disturbance potential to wildlife species would likely increase.

Commercial and recreational packstock forage utilization standards under Alternative 2 will maintain the highest level of wildlife habitat suitability since light grazing is generally considered to have only minor effects on wildlife species utilization of riparian habitats. Alternatives 1-Modified and 1 allow for light to moderate grazing. The upper limits of forage and shrub utilization under these two alternatives are consistent with the most recent guidelines of the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment that determined these standards would provide for most wildlife species use of riparian habitats. Alternatives 3 and 4 to a lesser degree will have the most adverse effects on wildlife use of riparian habitats. Moderate to moderately high forage utilization up to 55% will reduce nesting, hiding and foraging habitat suitability for some wildlife species such as songbirds, voles, great gray owls (if present), and mule deer.

Alternative 2 provides for a 100 foot buffer of camps from water. Similarly it has tighter restrictions on the allowance of user created trails and camp densities in a given area. In popular destination areas this should provide better access for wildlife species associated within riparian. Alternatives 1-modified and 1 rate a close second while alternatives 3 and 4 provide for the least mitigation in riparian habitats. Conversely the Alternatives 2, 1- Modified, and 1 shift the effects of these camps into the forested areas. Most wildlife management guidelines generally are in favor of this.

Fire closures in the high montane and sub-alpine zones above 10,000 to 10,400 feet will provide better local wildlife habitat conditions under Alternatives 2, 1-Modified and 1.

Food storage requirements under Alternatives 1-Modified and 1 will be more consistent with

wilderness objectives to maintain wildlife populations that are “wild” and are utilizing their natural food sources. Alternative 1-Modified is the better of the two since it applies this food storage requirement on both sides of the Sierra. Alternatives 3 and 4 are inconsistent with wilderness objectives to keep wildlife “wild.”

Threatened, Endangered Species

The Biological Assessment submitted to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act has concluded that implementation of any alternative may affect but will not likely adversely affect the threatened Paiute cutthroat trout, threatened Lahontan trout, threatened bald eagle, or the Endangered Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep. All alternatives are similar in their effects on these species.

Sensitive Wildlife Species

The biological evaluation prepared for this EIS has determined that implementation of any alternative may affect individual Mountain-yellow-legged frog, Yosemite toad, willow flycatcher, peregrine falcon, northern goshawk, great gray owl, California spotted owl, wolverine, Sierra Nevada red fox, Pacific fisher, American marten, Townsend’s big-eared bat, pallid bat, and Wong’s springsnail, but will not result in a trend toward federal listing as threatened or endangered or result in a loss of viability for any of these species. Any adverse effects that are indentified on a site-specific basis such as human disturbance at a goshawk nest, or peregrine falcon aerie will be evaluated through a biological evaluation and appropriate mitigation measures implemented. Survey requirements and management standards and guidelines recently adopted in the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment for the Yosemite toad, mountain yellow – legged frog, willow flycatcher, northern goshawk, Pacific fisher, American marten, Sierra Nevada red fox, great gray owl and California spotted owl will be implemented to ensure all alternatives mitigate any unacceptable adverse effects to these species.

Forest Service Region 5 Sensitive Plant Species

The Biological Evaluation prepared for this EIS has determined that implementation of any alternative may affect individual sensitive plants, but will not result in a trend toward Federal listing as Threatened or Endangered or result in a loss of viability for any of these species.

All alternatives provide for monitoring impacts to sensitive plants and adjusting management as needed to minimize impacts to sensitive plant species. However, use levels and patterns of use, packstock forage standards, setbacks from water and other standards that can affect the degree of impacts to vegetation, do differ between alternatives. Alternatives 1, 1 – Modified, and 2 would be expected to reduce potential impacts from the level occurring currently as described in Alternative 3. Alternatives 1, 1 – Modified, and 2 would likely see a reduction in potential threats to sensitive plants, in high use areas in particular; simultaneously, Alternative 2 could potentially see an increase in impacts in low use areas, due to the redistribution of use over a broader area. It is difficult to quantify the overall effects to sensitive plants of these two alternatives in comparison to each other, as the results will vary widely according to site-specific changes that may result from changing use patterns. Alternative 4 would have an anticipated increase overall in potential impacts over the other alternatives, due to more visitor freedom and potentially higher use levels; however, this could be partially offset by more stringent allowable utilization standards for packstock as compared to Alternative 3, especially in meadow habitats.

Human Environment

Recreation

Visitor Use

Alternative 1 and 1 - Modified manage visitor use through three categories. This scheme allows for visitor use to occur in a manner that concentrates the impacts associated with visitor use in the popular destination areas and allows for low density of visitor use in the majority of the wildernesses. Under Alternative 1, 95%, is managed for high levels of solitude and dispersed use to balance visitor freedom, visitor use, resource protection, and experiential values. Alternative 1 - Modified manages 97% of the landscape in the lower density categories, and this alternative does a better job than the other alternatives at protecting areas that are currently pristine.

Alternative 2 manages the entire wilderness with one standard. It protects the wilderness experience of the visitor by providing for low visitor density. In actuality this alternative protects visitor experience more than resources, since in managing for similar conditions across the landscape, use will disperse and more widespread impacts will occur. This alternative will have the effect of improving conditions where use is currently high and impacts are recurring year to year, but may not protect the pristine areas as well as Alternatives 1 or 1 - Modified.

Alternatives 3 and 4 manage for levels of use that will continue to grow, particularly in areas that currently receive moderate to low use. Impacts will continue to spread and use patterns will not be easily managed from a trailhead quota alone.

Camping

Changes in patterns of camping may occur with Alternatives 1, 1 – Modified, and 2, as areas become closed to campfires. In the future, with the possibility of using destination quotas and designated sites as a management tool in Alternative 1, 1 Modified and 2, visitor freedom on campsite selection will be diminished. Visitor freedom and choice in selecting campsites will be higher in Alternatives 3 and 4.

Day Use

In none of the alternatives will there be any immediate consequences for day use. In the future, in Alternatives 1, 1 – Modified, and 2 there are guidelines in place for future caps on day use. Alternative 1- Modified provides more direction than the other alternatives for acquiring baseline data on day use and includes a standard for triggering the need for analysis. Alternative 2 has more immediate direction for limits being placed on day use. This will have the effect of having a higher quality of wilderness experience in areas that currently receive high levels of day use. At the same time, it prevents many people from access for day use. Alternative 4 allows for day use levels to continue and to grow. Alternative 3 is silent on the issue, but past management practices have allowed for a day use limit to be placed in extreme cases such as Mt. Whitney.

Riding and Packstock

In Alternatives 1, 3, and 4 there is no change in management of private riding and packstock

activities. The visitor that utilizes stock for travel is not limited any differently than other visitors. In Alternative 1 - Modified, direction is added that assigns a designation to trails to not recommend them for stock travel. Commercial packstock would be prohibited on these trails. This designation currently exists but with the added direction applied to commercial packstock, it has a greater effect on riding and packstock than other alternatives.

In Alternative 2 there are four trails that will become hiker-only, Shepherd, Taboose, Sawmill and Baxter. This will eliminate riding and packstock use in those areas. There are currently very low levels of stock use on those trails and they are difficult for stock travel. Also in Alternative 2 is the reduction in party size for cross-country travel to 8 persons and 8 head of stock. The effect of this will be that parties wanting to travel off trail will be limited to only one horse per rider for parties of 8 riders, or a small party with few packstock. This will have an effect on large parties wanting to travel off trail.

Grazing would be regulated by range readiness standards based on annual snow pack in Alternatives 1 and 2.

With higher utilization standards in Alternatives 1 and 2, there would be more of an effect on packstock visitors in than in Alternatives 3 and 4. Limited grazing would be anticipated in popular key use grazing areas in Alternatives 1 and 2. This would have the likely effect of shifting use patterns into areas, which are currently receiving little or no use. In areas or situations where these shifts in grazing patterns are not practical or feasible, there would be an increased dependence on supplemental feed. Closures would be more prevalent in Alternatives 1, 3 and 4.

Rock Climbing and Mountaineering

Rock climbing and mountaineering will not be affected any differently than other recreational visitor activities in any of the alternatives.

Winter Use

Alternatives 1 and 1 - Modified define recreation zones for winter use. This will provide a framework for managing winter use and could lead to winter quotas in the future. There will be no immediate effects on winter use and only when the desired condition of the category is exceeded will actions be taken. Areas that have been used for winter use will continue to be acceptable. This action will insure that the experience of low-density visitation in the winter will be maintained.

Alternative 2 maintains the same conditions temporally and spatially, allowing for a wilderness-wide paradigm for management. The effect will be that winter use will likely continue to increase and will be a capped with one year-round quota.

Alternatives 3 and 4 would have no effect on current use or growth of winter use in the future. It is likely that this use would continue to grow at a slow rate.

Commercial Activities

Alternatives 1 and 1 - Modified will affect commercial operators by maintaining their overall use

to current use levels, limiting their growth, subjecting them to the temporal and spatial controls of entry quotas, and changing their access to wilderness permits. Growth will be allowed but limited by the needs outlined in the needs assessment. Alternative 1 established a method for continuing to allow more commercial use to be allocated, while Alternative 1 Modified establishes a set 'pool' of use to be allocated. Decisions on increasing allocations will have to address the criteria of meeting the identified needed activities and operating in areas where the resource is capable of withstanding more use.

In Alternative 2 commercial operators are held at levels below their current use for the activities of packstock supported trips, backpacking, and day rides. This will have an effect on the businesses conducting these activities. No growth for any activities is allowed and this will have the effect of causing operators to find alternative locations for their activities. Also in this alternative the commercial operators will be competing with the general public for access to the wilderness through the wilderness permit system. This, combined with a reduction in quotas, may have a significant effect on commercial operations.

In Alternative 3 commercial operators would continue under existing permits and terms of permits. When permits expire or transfer ownership it will be very difficult to re-issue based on the lack of a needs assessment or forest plan direction for special uses. It cannot be predicted how a no action alternative may affect current operators.

In Alternative 4 commercial use would be allowed to grow based on current allocations of use. With this alternative, when service days are not being utilized, they can be redistributed to other operators in a "pool" of temporary use. This will allow operators to grow, temporarily, but will also have the effect of being not dependable and consistent year to year.

There would be some beneficial effects to operators that will continue to write their own wilderness permits. With the added 'licensing' to be authorized to write permits there would be an improvement in the accountability and reporting requirements and it is likely that the quality of data would improve. With case by case decision making on growth and uses there is the possibility that there would evolve many inconsistencies in approaches and decisions across the wildernesses.

Permits and Quotas

In Alternatives 1, 1 – Modified, and 2 the Forest Service will issue all wilderness permits and there will be quotas in effect year round. In Alternatives 3 and 4 there will be non-Forest Service entities issuing permits. Under Alternative 4 there are some licensing criteria that will be established that will likely result in improvements to reporting than are currently occurring and would occur with Alternative 3.

The quotas themselves vary by alternative as described below. In Alternative 1 - Modified, there is more allowance for reducing competition among operators than in Alternative 1 and Alternative 2, by the fact that on trails where there are multiple commercial activities, there are multiple quotas. Alternative 2 creates the most competitive environment for access amongst all users.

Table 2.25. Comparison of Quotas by Alternative

Wild.	Trailhead	Alternative 1 Modified	Alternative 1 (non-commercial / commercial)	Alternative 2 (one quota)	Alternative 3 (no action)	Alternative 4 (daily quota)
JM	Baker/Green	8 *	300 year / 0	10	none	none
JM	Baxter Pass	8*	10 day / 20 year	5	15/day	15/day
AA	Beck Lake	15	10 day / 15 day	20	25/day	25/day
JM	Big Pine – NF	25—15—8	24 day / 20 day	24	24/day	24/day
JM	Big Pine – SF	12	8 day / 4 day	12	12/day	12/day
JM	Birch Lake	8*	5 day / 5 year	5	none	none
JM	Bishop Pass	36—15	36 day / 15 day	36	36/day	36/day
AA	Bloody Canyon	8*	5 day / 0	5	none	none
JM	Convict Lake	10*	10 day / 0	5	none	none
JM	Cottonwood Lakes	60—15	60 day / 15 day	40	60/day	60/day
AA	Deer Lake	10	10 day / 10 day	10	10/day	10/day
JM	Duck Lake	30—15	40 day / 15 day	30	40/day	40/day
AA	Fern Lake	10	5 day / 75 year	10	20/day	20/day
AA	Fern/Yost	8	100 year / 0	5	none	none
AA	Fish Creek	15—15	20 day / 15 day	20	25/day	25/day
JM	Gable Lakes	8*	150 year / 0	5	none	none
JM	George Lake	10	w/Tyee	w/Tyee	w/Tyee	w/Tyee
JM	George Creek/Mt Williamson	8*	6 day / 0	5	6/day	6/day
AA	Gibbs	8	200 year / 120 year	5	none	none
AA	Glacier Canyon	8	100 year / 50 year	5	none	none
JM	Golden Trout Lakes	10*	10 day / 10 year		25/day	25/day
AA	High Trail (PCT)	20—15	15 day / 15 day	20	25/day	25/day
JM	Hilton Lakes/Creek	15—15	10 day / 15 day	10	20/day	20/day
JM	Horton Lakes	10	5 day / 50 year	5	none	none
AA	John Muir Trail, North	10—10	10 day / 10 day	10	10/day	10/day
JM	Kearsarge Pass	60—15	60 day / 15 day	40	60/day	60/day
JM	Lamarck Lakes	10—8	15 day / 25 year	10	16/day	16/day
JM	Laurel Lakes	8	5 day / 200 year	5	none	none
JM	Little Lakes	25—10	24 day / 5 day	24	24/day	24/day
JM	McGee Creek	15—15	15 day / 15 day	20	24/day	24/day

Wild.	Trailhead	Alternative 1 Modified	Alternative 1 (non-commercial / commercial)	Alternative 2 (one quota)	Alternative 3 (no action)	Alternative 4 (daily quota)
JM	Meysan Lake	10	10 day / 50 year	10	15/day	15/day
AA	Minaret Lake	10—10	10 day / 60 year	10	10/day	10/day
JM	Mono Pass	20—15	20 day / 10 day	20	24/day	24/day
JM	Mt Whitney Day Hike	100*	100 day / 0	50	150/day	150/day
JM	Mt Whitney Overnight	60*	75 day / 0	40	50/day	50/day
JM	North Fork Lone Pine Creek	10—5	10 day / 5 day	15	15/day	15/day
AA	Parker Creek	10	200 year / 100 year	5	none	none
JM	Pine Creek	15—15	10 day / 15 day	20	20/day	20/day
JM	Piute Pass	30—15	30 day / 15 day	30	32/day	32/day
AA	Red Cones	15	20 day / 5 year	20	25/day	25/day
JM	Red Lake	8*	200 year / 0	5	none	none
AA	River Trail	30—8	35 day / 5 day	20	35/day	35/day
AA	Rush Creek	30—15	/ 20 day	25	34/day	34/day
JM	Sabrina Lake	25—15	25 day / 15 day	25	28/day	28/day
JM	Sawmill Pass	10	10 day / 25 year	10	15/day	15/day
AA	Shadow Lake	30—15	30 day / 15 day	20	30/day	30/day
JM	Shepherd Pass	15	10 day / 5 day	10	15/day	15/day
JM	Taboose Pass	10	10 day / 40 year	10	15/day	15/day
JM	Tamarack Lakes	10—8	5 day / 5 day	5	none	none
JM	Treasure Lakes	10—8	12 day / 30 year	10	12/day	12/day
JM	Tuttle Creek	8*	50 year / 0	5	none	none
JM	Tyee	10*	10 day / 15 year	5	none	none
JM	Valentine Lake	8*	5 day / 0	5	none	none
JM	Bear Creek	10	19 day / 5 day	12	30/day	30/day
JM	Bear Ridge	10				
AA	Chiquito / Quartz	35	25 day / 10 day	16	35/day	35/day
DL	Cliff Lake	20	8 day / 5 day	10	none	600/year
JM	Crown / Rancheria	10	8 day/5 day	9	none	600/year
JM	Devils / Graveyard	20—10	16 day/5 day	20	24/day	24/day
AA	Fernandez	21—8—12	27 day/12 day	30	36/day	39/day
JM	Florence	35—15	36 day/5 day	40	72	72

Wild.	Trailhead	Alternative 1 Modified	Alternative 1 (non-commercial / commercial)	Alternative 2 (one quota)	Alternative 3 (no action)	Alternative 4 (daily quota)
AA	Isberg.	22—8—8	22 day/13 day	21	33	35
AA	Jackass / Norris	10—8	8 day/9day	14	15/day	17/day
AA	Mammoth	25	21 day/5 day	5	25/day	26/day
JM	Maxon	25—8—5	16 day / 7 day	23	75/day	75/day
AA	Miller / Cassidy	10	5 day / 5 day	104/year	none	200/year
JM	Mono	30	24 day / 5 day	26	36/day	36/day
JM	Onion Springs	10	5 day / 5 day	7	None	500/year
AA	Squaw Dome/South Fork / Hell's ½ Acre/Logan Mdw.	Split out by trailhead listed below	5 day / 5 day	104/year	None	200/year
AA	Walton	9—8	7day / 9 day	208/year	15/day	16/day
AA	Squaw Dome	10				
AA	South Fork	10				
AA	Hells Half Acre	10				
AA	Logan Meadow	10				
DL	Willow Meadow	30*	30 day / 5 day Combined w/ Badger Flat	3 Combined w/ Badger Flat 1	None Combined w/ Badger Flat	57/day Combined w/ Badger Flat
	Badger Flat	10				
JM	Woodchuck	20	7 day / 5 day	8	none	600/year

*** Alternative 1 - Modified combines single quotas and multiple quotas. This table will show one quota if it is a single quota. Two quotas reflect a multiple quota that is "non-commercial – commercial;" and if three numbers are listed it indicates a multiple quota that is "non-commercial – packer – other outfitters." An asterisk (*) identifies a single quota where commercial use will be approved on a case-by-case basis.*

Party Size

In Alternatives 1, 3 and 4 there will be no changes to party size. The effect of this will be that there may be continued tension between hikers and stock groups. Also, with the same party size for trail and cross country travel there may be increased impacts in off trail areas since these areas are not maintained for large numbers of stock or people traveling. Alternative 1 – Modified allows for borrowing from the next day's quota on trails with low quotas, for all users, so as not to affect party size. This borrowing is strictly controlled by specific guidelines.

Alternative 2 imposes a cross country party size of 8 persons and 8 head of stock, which will be a reduction in group size for off trail travel. This will have the effect of concentrating large parties onto system trails. This will inconvenience some visitors and commercial operators and infringe

on the freedom of large groups to travel off system trails. This will improve the experience for groups of less than 8 traveling cross county since they will not encounter large groups.

Stock Related Impacts

In Alternatives 1, 1 - Modified and 2 stock related impacts would be reduced by putting into effect authorized grazing start dates and maximum allowable utilization standards. These actions would cause an increased need to pack in supplemental feed during early season with additional stock. The effect of having additional stock travel on trails during early season would likely increase maintenance and reconstruction needs over time.

Stock related impacts would be reduced further in Alternative 2 through restrictions on cross-country travel.

In Alternative 4 stock related impacts would continue to occur at current levels. Some meadow conditions would further deteriorate. Stock related impacts would continue to occur but at levels lower than Alternative 3.

Visitor Impacts

Visitor impacts would be reduced through campsite density standards, setbacks from water and restrictions on cross-country travel (Alternative 2 only). Alternatives 1, 1 – Modified, and 2 have higher standards in place for campsite density, however in Alternative 2 there would likely be more widespread impacts, as there is one standard applied wilderness-wide. In Alternatives 1 and 1 – Modified, with high standards in place for all but the areas identified as category 3 (5% of the wilderness in Alt. 1 and 3% in Alt. 1 - Modified), impacts would remain concentrated and mitigated, as opposed to dispersed as they would in Alternative 2.

Alternative 3 and 4 would define current levels of impact as acceptable; this would have the effect of gradually deteriorating conditions, particularly in the riparian areas where use tends to concentrate.

Social Conditions

Alternative 2 protects social conditions more than any of the other alternatives. It disperses use and caps use at low levels, thereby achieving high opportunities for solitude wilderness wide. Alternatives 1 and 1 – Modified protect social conditions in all but the areas that are traditionally popular, where they determine that social conditions are not to be managed for in the same way as the rest of the wilderness. They establish different experiential settings across the landscape. Alternatives 3 and 4 allows for use patterns to continue without change in management. This has the effect of protecting the social conditions in most areas without trails, and places that have not been popular to visitors.

Heritage Resources and Effects of Alternatives on Contemporary Native American Uses

Table 2.26 below comparatively rates the effects of the various alternatives on Heritage Resources. Rankings are numbered 1-5. A ranking of 5 indicates that this alternative will have the greatest effect, while a ranking of 1 indicates that this alternative will have the least effect on Heritage Resources.

Table 2.26. Potential Effects to Heritage Resources

Action	Alternative 1 Modified	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Use Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Concentrate Use	Unknown, need to monitor in Category 3 areas / 1	Unknown, need to monitor in Category 3 areas / 2	5	3	4
Designate campsites	Same as above; designated campsites may reduce effects to heritage sites in Category 3 areas / 1	Same as above; designated campsites may reduce effects to heritage sites in Category 3 areas / 2	3	4	5
Campsite Density Standards	Same as two above 1	Same as two above 2	4	5	3
Group Size	2	3	1	4	5
Day Use	2	3	1	4	5
Fire Restrictions by Elevation	1 Building campfires may affect sites	2 Building campfires may affect sites	3	4	5
Campfire Closures	1	2	3	4	5
Commercial Growth Limits Allocations	1	2	3 Growth may damage heritage sites outside wilderness	4	5
Commercial Use Quotas	2	3	1	4	5
Campsites From water	2	2	1	4	5
Trail Management	2	3	1	4	5
Rec Stock Utilization Standards	2	3	1	4	5

Social - Economic

There would be little difference economically between the different alternatives. Alternative 3 would maintain current levels. Alternatives 1 and 2 may show a small reduction in economics to some commercial operators. Alternatives 1, 1 – Modified, 3 and 4 all would allow for some growth in commercial uses although at different levels. Alternative 1 – Modified provides for the least room for growth of the four. Alternatives 3 and 4 provide the best opportunities and therefore provide better economic opportunities for commercial operators.

There would be little noticeable economic effects from any of the alternatives to the four counties included in the planning area.

Alternatives 1, 1 - Modified and 2 would cause some short-term displacement of use, particularly on the Mt. Whitney trail and in some areas determined to have limiting factor concerns. Alternative 2 would cause some changes in day use, and would potentially change locals' abilities to be spontaneous with regard to day use. Alternatives 1, 1 – Modified, 3 and 4 would not likely result in changes in day use to local users.

None of the alternatives would likely result any change in effects to low-income or minority users from the current situation.