



United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION

Restoring, Enhancing and Sustaining Forests in California, Hawaii and the Pacific Islands

Sierra National Forest

WILDERNESS AREAS

High Sierra Ranger District

The Sierra National Forest now contains approximately 528,000 acres of Congressionally designated wilderness. Almost 227,000 acres were added to the Sierra's existing system as a result of the California Wilderness Act of 1984. The Sierra's five wilderness areas are the Ansel Adams, Dinkey Lakes, John Muir, Kaiser, and Monarch. The following "thumbnail sketches" are intended to give you a feel for the character of each area—the terrain, vegetation, and outstanding features you will encounter during your visit. More complete descriptions plus information on access, trails, and permit requirements are contained in individual brochures for each wilderness.

ANSEL ADAMS

The California Wilderness Act of 1984 nearly doubled the acreage of the former Minarets Wilderness and changed the name to Ansel Adams. This wilderness is located in both the Inyo and Sierra National Forests and covers approximately 228,500 acres (138,660 acres are in the Sierra National Forest). Ansel Adams is characterized by spectacular alpine scenery with barren granite peaks, steep-walled gorges, and rock outcroppings. Elevations range from 3,500 feet to 13,157 feet, with several small glaciers on the north and northeast facing slopes of the highest peaks. There are also a number of fairly large lakes on the eastern slope of the extremely steep Ritter Range. The Ansel Adams Wilderness contains the headwaters of the North and Middle Forks of the San Joaquin River.

DINKEY LAKES

The 30,000 acre Dinkey Lakes Wilderness was also created by the California Wilderness Act of

1984. It lies on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada southeast of Huntington Lake and northwest of Courtright Reservoir. It is located just west of the John Muir Wilderness and is separated by the Dusy-Ershim OHV Route. Most of the Dinkey Lakes Wilderness is above 8,000 feet and Three Sister Peak is the highest point at 10,619 feet. Vegetation is primarily lodgepole pine combined with many meadows and granite outcroppings. Sixteen lakes are clustered in the west central region of the wilderness.

JOHN MUIR

The John Muir Wilderness covers 584,000 acres in the Sierra and Inyo National Forests. It was increased by 81,000 acres in the California Wilderness Act. The John Muir extends along the crest of the Sierra Nevada from Mammoth Lakes southeastward for a distance of about 30 miles, then forks around the boundary of Kings Canyon National Park to the Crown Valley and Mount Whitney regions. This is a land of snow-capped mountains with hundreds of lakes, streams and beautiful meadows. Elevations range from 4,000 feet to 14,496 feet at Mount Whitney, with many peaks above 12,000 feet. Lower elevation slopes are covered with stands of Jeffrey pines, incense cedar, white and red fir, and lodgepole pine. The higher elevations are barren granite with many glacially carved lakes.

KAISER

The 22,700 acre Kaiser Wilderness is located immediately north of Huntington Lake, approximately 70 miles northeast of Fresno. Kaiser Ridge bisects the Wilderness and provides a commanding view of the central Sierra Nevada. The southern half of the wilderness is characterized by dense red fir and Jeffrey pine forests which extend up the gradual south slope



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of Kaiser Ridge. The top of the ridge is in the alpine zone. The descent from Kaiser Ridge into the northern part of the wilderness is quite abrupt. This northern region is much more open than the south side and contains eighteen small lakes.

Elevations range from 2,400 feet to over 10,000 feet. The lower elevations are predominantly chaparral covered with pine stands near the tops of the higher peaks. Rock outcroppings are found throughout the wilderness.

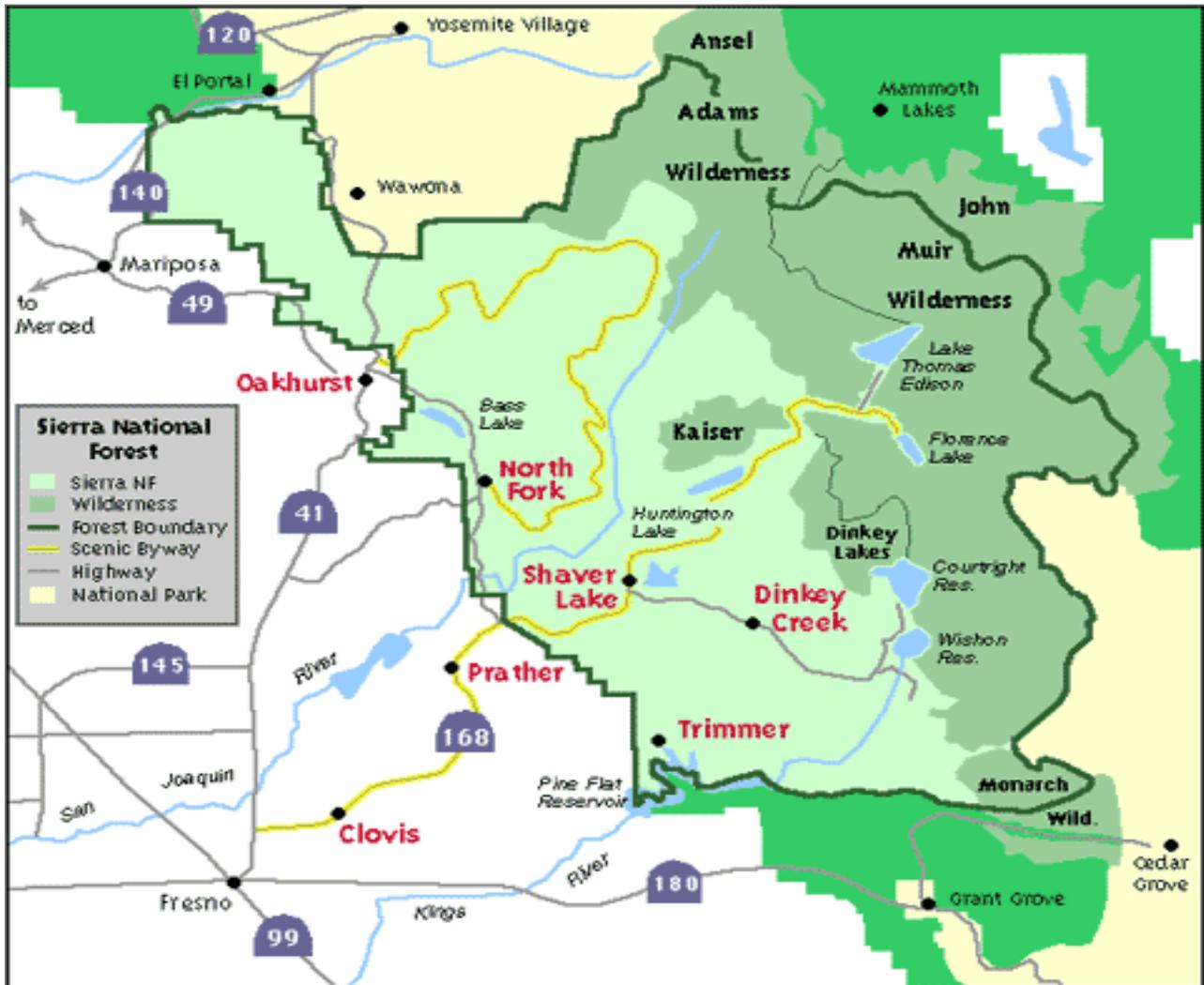
MONARCH

The Monarch Wilderness was created by the California Wilderness Act. It extends across 45,000 acres in the Sierra and Sequoia National Forests. The Sierra National Forest portion of the wilderness is extremely rugged and difficult to travel across. Steep slopes extend up from the Middle and Main Forks of the Kings River.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

High Sierra Ranger District

P.O. Box 559
Prather, CA 93651
559-855-5355
(TDD) 559-855-5367



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