

# **Special Recreation Permit Plan**

## **Winter Recreation**

**Angeles Crest**

**Big Pines**

**Mt. Baldy**

***Angeles National Forest***

### **Background**

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA) authorizes an SRP fee for permits issued for specialized recreation uses of Federal recreational lands and waters, such as group activities, recreation events, and motorized recreational vehicle use. Special recreation permits are issued as a means to allocate capacity or disperse use, protect natural and cultural resources, provide for health and safety of visitors, and help cover the higher costs for providing specialized services.

The three winter recreation SRP locations: Angeles Crest, Big Pines, and Mt. Baldy are all found within the Angeles National Forest (see enclosed maps). These three locations are managed specifically for winter recreation and a SRP recreation fee is charged when snow is present. Recreation fees relating to winter recreation have been charged at this location since 1997. The following recreation passes are accepted: the Adventure Pass (\$5 per day, \$30 annually, and \$5 for a second vehicle) or the America the Beautiful –the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Passes (Annual: \$80, Senior: \$10, and Access, Military, and Volunteer: free).

This plan describes the rationale for the special recreation permit, the location for which the special recreation permit is required, the specialized services and enhanced management, and how the special recreation permit fees are spent.

### **Rationale**

In southern California snow is an exciting and highly anticipated event which brings thousands of visitors to the national forests. For many visitors this will be the first time they have experienced driving and recreating in snow. It takes a carefully planned multi-agency approach to prepare for, and manage visitors during and after a snowfall event. Special services and management are targeted at health, safety, and sanitation issues while protecting natural and cultural resources. SRP recreation fees are charged when snow is present to support special services and management. The Forest Land

Management Plan includes a focus on improving the snowplay experience for both visitors and communities in the Angeles High Country Place.

## **Location**

The three winter SRPs are located within easy reach of the greater Los Angeles Basin, Inland Empire, and the Southern San Joaquin Valley areas. In southern California a snow event brings thousands of visitors to the national forests and these three locations are among the most heavily visited.

**Angeles Crest** – The SRP location is along the Angeles Crest Scenic Byway (Highway 2) from Shortcut Saddle (mile post 43.25) east to the CalTrans gate at Islip Saddle (milepost 64.10), see enclosed map. In winter, when snow is present, this section of the Angeles Crest Scenic Byway is very popular as it provides easy access for the residents of the San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys, as well as the Los Angeles Basin, to snow for winter recreation activities. The large crowds that come with good snow provide revenue for the local establishments such as Newcomb’s Inn (restaurant), and Kratka and Mount Waterman ski areas (all of which are excluded from the SRP). During a winter with snow, this area becomes the most heavily used on the District.

**Big Pines** – The SRP location is located along the Angeles Crest Scenic Byway (Highway 2) from the Forest boundary to the east to the Big Pine Lodge to the west (see enclosed map).

**Mt. Baldy** – The SRP location is located along the Mt. Baldy Road from Manker Flat Campground northeast to Mt. Baldy Ski Area parking lot (see attached map).

The communities of Mt. Baldy, Wrightwood, Upland, and Azusa benefit from the winter visitation.

## **Services and Management**

The Angeles National Forest works closely with local agencies to plan ahead for snowfall events. Each year the Forest convenes an annual pre-season meeting with the California Highway Patrol; CalTrans; Los Angeles and San Bernardino County Road Departments; local business owners; seasonal resort owners; Los Angeles and San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Departments; county search and rescue units, and local volunteer fire department. The nexus of these meetings is public safety. Specialized management actions and services include:

1. **Traffic and Visitor Management.** Angeles Crest and Big Pines Winter Recreation SRPs are located along California State Highways, and the Mt. Baldy SRP is located on Mt. Baldy Road (county road). Within all three SRP locations traffic congestion and pedestrians walking along the sides of the narrow roadways are significant public safety issues during the winter months. In addition icy roads; emergency vehicle access; high volumes of trash; and other issues related to high winter recreation use are common public safety concerns in the Angeles High Country. Often after a large snow event excited first-time visitors to snow country are inclined to park their vehicles in the roadway at the first sight of

snow, leaving unoccupied vehicles blocking traffic. First-time visitors often come unprepared for driving on ice and snow, and typically come dressed for warmer temperatures. To promote visitor safety and to manage traffic congestion the Forest and local law enforcement officials initiates traffic and visitor management efforts where applicable. Some of these management actions include temporary limited road access as determined by local law enforcement. The Forest Service in concert with local law enforcement monitor traffic flow, staff pull-over stations, and patrol SRP locations. Visitors are welcomed, presented with important safety information, and directed to locations in an attempt to manage and disburse the congestion and crowding.

2. **Sanitation.** When snow is present, these three SRPs receive intense and concentrated visitation. The large volume of associated human waste and trash presents natural resource and public health and safety impacts. The Forest provides extra portable toilets, trash bags, dumpsters, for every major snowfall. Roads and parking areas are plowed and restrooms are dug out after every snow event. Afterwards, the removal of winter recreation related trash (sleds, plastic sheets, food, toilet paper, etc.) is an extremely heavy workload.
3. **Public Safety and Security.** When snow is present these three SRPs receives large numbers of visitors in a concentrated area, presenting additional public safety, security, and natural resource concerns. A coordinated multi-agency effort which includes County and State law enforcement staff, volunteers, and forest employees, provide for public safety and security and resource protection. Special patrols are conducted by Forest Service, Los Angeles County Sheriff Deputies, and Montrose Search and Rescue Team. The California Highway Patrol conducts special patrols and staff chain control check points.

## **Use of Special Recreation Permit Fee Revenue**

Recreation fees are used for the following:

- Forest Service staffing to provide information, education, and visitor assistance.
- Coordinate volunteers to assist in providing information, education, and visitor assistance.
- Coordination with state and local agencies, volunteers, media, and search and rescue organizations.
- Clean-up and removal of trash and human waste.
- Provide additional portable toilets and trash receptacles.

## **Partners and Cooperators**

- California Department of Transportation
- California Highway Patrol
- Los Angeles and San Bernardino County Sheriffs
- Montrose Search and Rescue Team
- San Dimas Search and Rescue Team
- Los Angeles and San Bernardino county road departments
- Los Angeles Boards of Supervisors

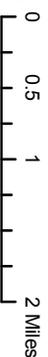
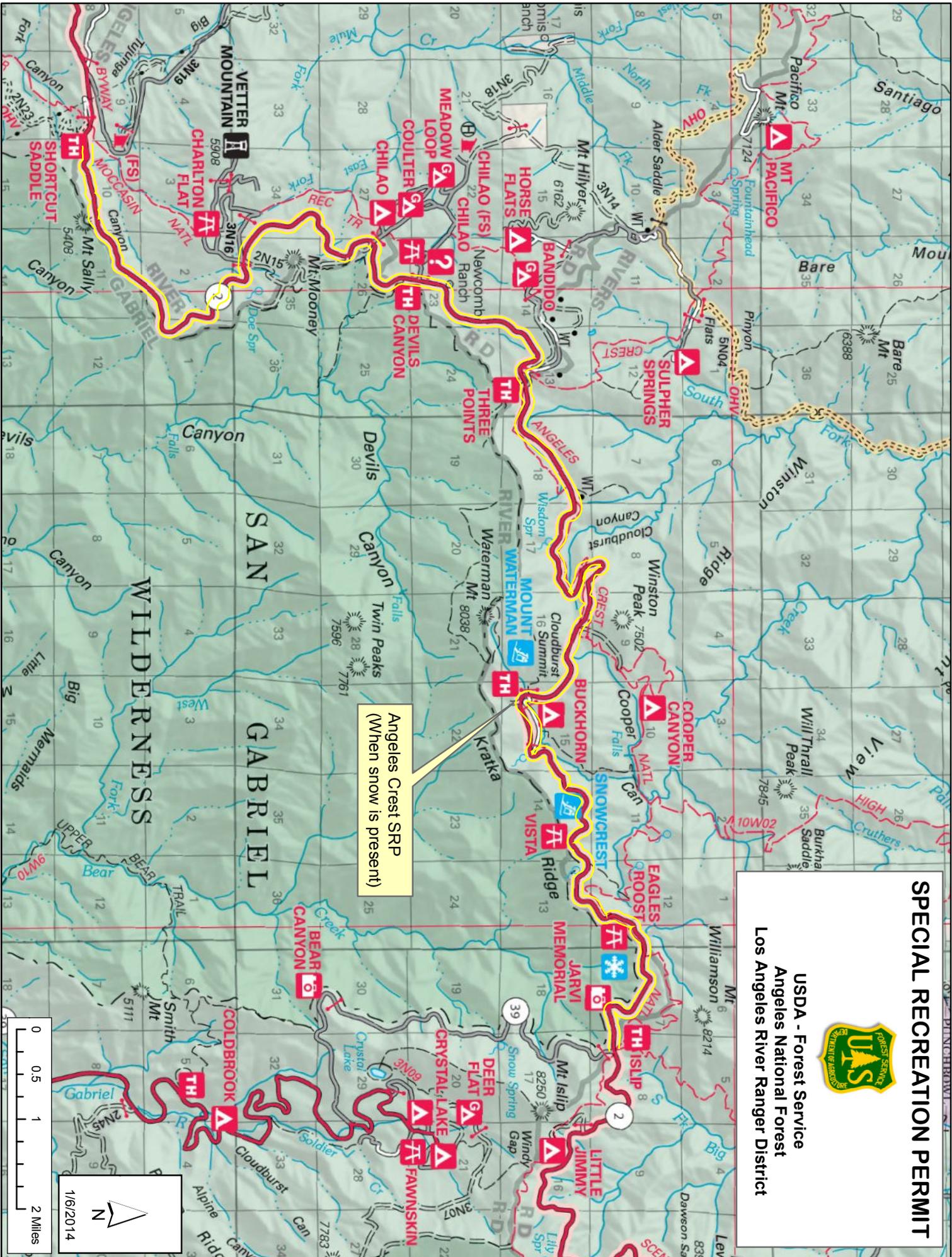
- Volunteer groups
- National Nordic Ski Patrol

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USDA - Forest Service  
Angeles National Forest  
Los Angeles River Ranger District

Angeles Crest SRP  
(When snow is present)

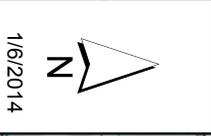
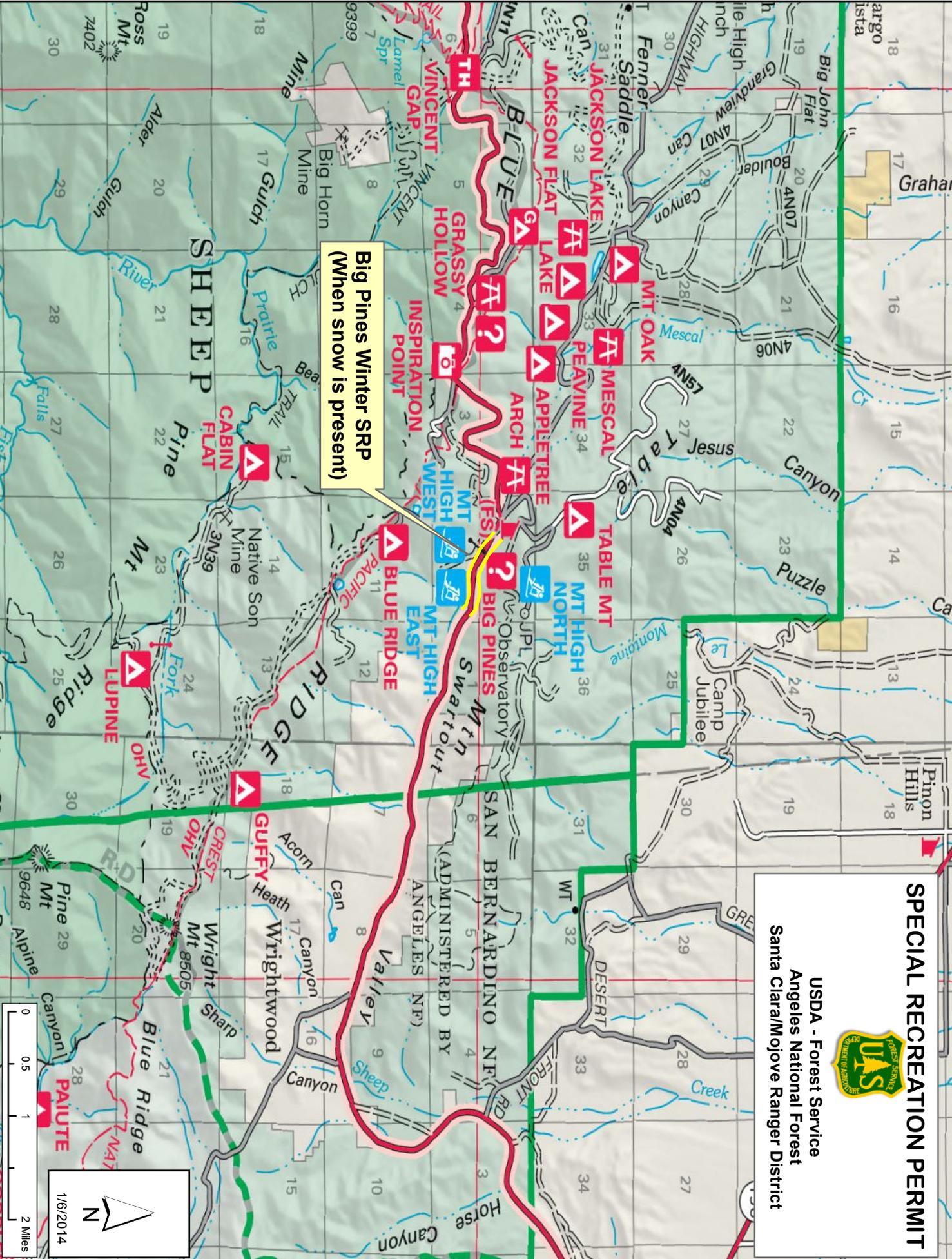


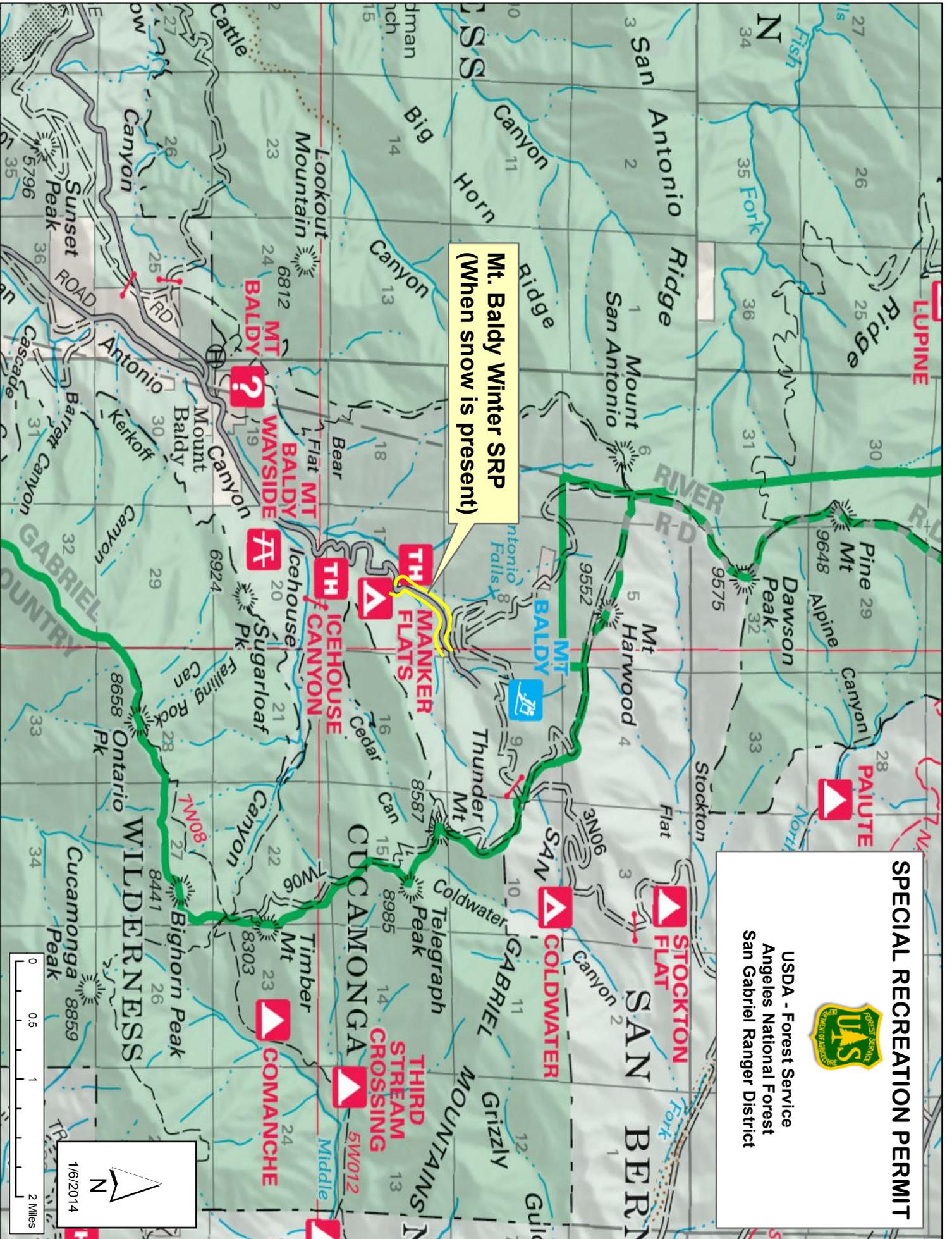
# SPECIAL RECREATION PERMIT



USDA - Forest Service  
Angeles National Forest  
Santa Clara/Mojave Ranger District

Big Pines Winter SRP  
(When snow is present)

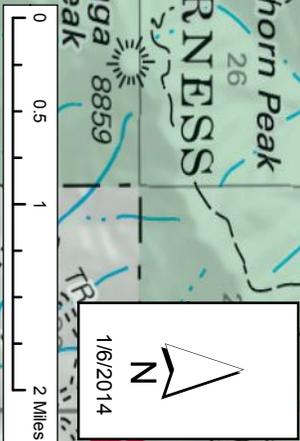




**Mt. Baldy Winter SRP**  
 (When snow is present)

**SPECIAL RECREATION PERMIT**

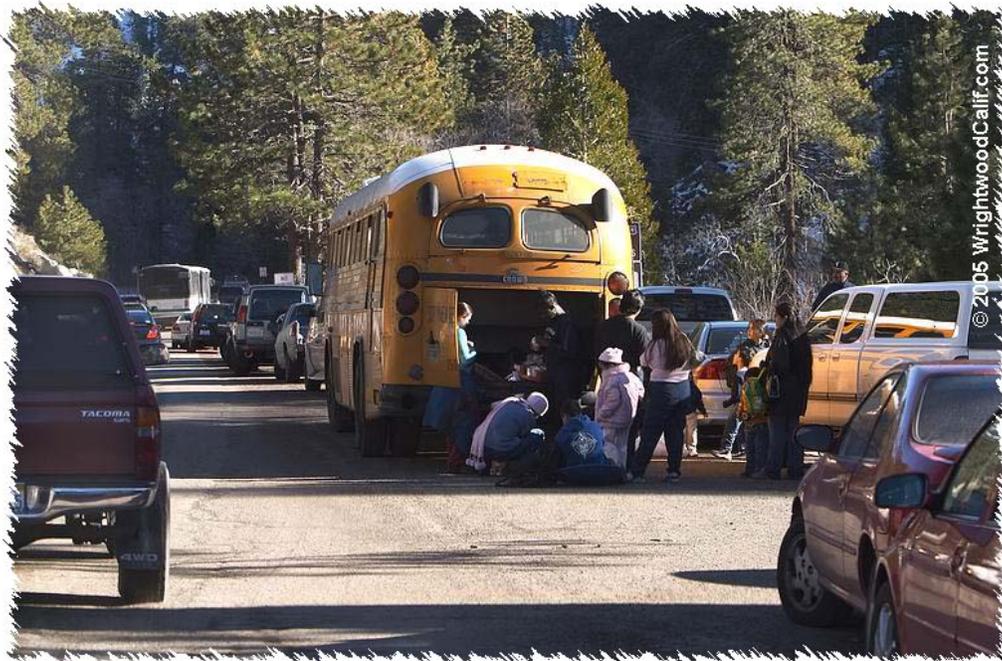
  
 USDA - Forest Service  
 Angeles National Forest  
 San Gabriel Ranger District



Angeles National Forest Winter Recreation



Visitor Contact Point at Highway 2 (Big Pines & Angeles Crest Winter SRP)



Big Pines Winter Recreation



Winter Recreation SRP – Traffic Control



Manker Flats Campground

Mt. Baldy Winter Recreation



Coordination with Partners