



Mokelumne Wilderness

Eldorado National Forest
Amador Ranger District



WELCOME TO THE MOKELUMNE WILDERNESS.

A 105,165-acre wilderness that straddles the crest of the central Sierra Nevada, within the Stanislaus, Eldorado, and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forests. This area lies within portions of Calaveras, Alpine, and Amador Counties and is bordered by State Highway 4 on the south and State Highway 88 on the north. Watersheds drain to the Mokelumne River on the west slope and the Carson River on the east slope.

The Mokelumne Wilderness is a rugged landscape of great scenic beauty. Much of the area is dominated by volcanic ridges and peaks. The prominent feature is disputably the rugged Mokelumne River Canyon. There are many smaller streams flowing through deep granitic canyons but only a few lakes concentrated in the northern portion of this spectacular area. Elevations range from about 3,900 feet near Salt Springs Reservoir to 10,380 feet at Round Top.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A WILDERNESS?

The Wilderness Act of 1964 states that Wilderness is to be "protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and [is an area] which...has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation". The Mokelumne Wilderness is managed according to the Act to "ensure an enduring resource of Wilderness for present and future generations."

As a visitor to the Mokelumne Wilderness, you have the opportunity to experience solitude and nature in its most wild state, to enjoy spectacular scenery, and to hike, cross-country ski, ride horseback, or enjoy other outdoor activities. These attractions and easy access from urban areas draw thousands of people to this Wilderness each year.

WHO CAN USE WILDERNESS?

Use is open to hikers and packstock. **Mechanized and motorized equipment** such as bicycles, hanggliders, over-snow vehicles, strollers, chainsaws or game carts is prohibited.

WILDERNESS ETHICS

Human impacts can degrade and destroy wilderness resources, as well as detract from other visitors' wilderness experience. Many areas in the Mokelumne show dramatic, and sometimes irreversible, signs of heavy or improper use. Late snow melt, short growing seasons, and limited nutrient flow make for slow recovery of the Mokelumne's alpine environment. Due to overcrowding, water quality degradation, destruction of vegetation, soil erosion, and dependence of wildlife on human food, all visitors must share in the responsibility of protecting these unique and fragile resources.

GENERAL WEATHER CONDITIONS

Snowcaps typically linger into June in the Round Top region to the north and on the Mokelumne Plateau to the south, while the Mokelumne River Canyon above Salt Springs Reservoir can be free of snow as early as March. Summers are generally dry and mild, but afternoon thundershowers occur periodically, and nighttime temperatures may dip below freezing at any time.

PERMIT LOCATIONS

Mokelumne Wilderness:

Amador Ranger Station
26820 Silver Drive
Pioneer, CA 95666
(209) 259-3774

Call for current days and hours.

Placerville Ranger District,
HWY 50
4260 Eight Mile Road
Camino, CA 95709
(530) 644-2324

Call for current days and hours

Permits for the Carson Pass Management Area (CPMA) are only issued at:

Carson Pass Information Station
Highway 88, at Carson Pass.
(209) 258-8606
Open during summer only.

Call for current days and hours.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

WILDERNESS PERMITS

- ◆ **Overnight Use:** A valid **wilderness permit is required year-round** for entry into Mokelumne Wilderness for overnight stays. You can obtain a permit from one of the locations listed in the sidebar. *Permits not only provide important recreation use data, they have also proven invaluable in search and rescue emergencies.*
 - ◇ **Group size = 8 people maximum** in one group hiking or camping together. *If your group size exceeds these limits, reduce the number of people, split the group to visit different areas, or visit an area which permits larger numbers. You are not permitted to camp or travel within one mile of a related group. You can contact the Amador Ranger District or Carson Pass Information Station for alternatives outside of Mokelumne Wilderness.*
- ◆ **Day Use:** No permit required.
 - ◇ **Group size = 12 people maximum** in one group hiking together.
- ◆ **Fees:** No permit fee. Depending on what trailhead you are entering at there may be a parking fee.
- ◆ **Camping:** In the Carson Pass Management area, camping is only allowed in designated sites at Fourth of July, Round Top, and Winnemucca Lakes. *(Please refer to the Carson Pass Section for further information and regulations.)*

LEAVE NO TRACE

- ◆ **Bury human and canine waste 6 - 8 inches deep** at least 200' (100 paces) from water sources, campsites, and trails. Pack out your used toilet paper. *Digging animals will expose waste buried in shallow holes.*
- ◆ **Pack it in, Pack it out!** Leaving refuse, debris or litter is prohibited. Toilet paper must be buried or packed out.
- ◆ **Washing with soap in a stream, lake or other water source is prohibited.** Insect repellents, sunscreens and soaps (even biodegradable soaps) all contaminate water sources. *Please help protect aquatic life and drinking water quality by rinsing off contaminants before swimming and by washing cookware well away from water sources.*
- ◆ **Damaging or removing any natural or historic feature in the wilderness is not allowed.** Please leave wildflowers and historical relics for all to enjoy, and avoid trampling



Camp Away from Water

- ◆ Camp at least 100 - 200 feet (50 -100 paces) away from water sources (streams, creeks, and lakes) or trails.
- ◆ Camping within 300 feet of Emigrant Lake is not permitted *in order to protect and promote the*



Drinking Water

Treat water by boiling or filtering through a portable water filter.



CAMPFIRES

Campfires are no longer allowed within the Mokelumne Wilderness borders.

Typically, campfires are prohibited because dead and downed wood is critical habitat for many alpine species in the Mokelumne Wilderness, and the decomposition of wood plays a critical role in the nutritive value of the soils in which high-altitude vegetation must survive.

As forest conditions have become hotter and drier, this increases the fire danger level and the opportunities for a wildfire start. Given the remoteness of the wilderness area, access for fire suppression personnel and equipment is challenging at best and reduces the variety of resources we can utilize to fight wildfire while increasing the response time.

Permit Required

You must obtain a **California campfire permit** to use your camp stove. Available online at: www.readyforwildfire.org/permits/campfire-permit/.

- ◆ **Fire Restrictions** - No fire are allowed within the Mokelumne Wilderness year round

RECREATIONAL STOCK USE

Length of Stay -- 2 nights

Group Size -- 4 animals per group.



Hitching, tethering or hobbling a

horse or other saddle or pack animal is prohibited within 200 feet of a water source or within 100 feet of a campsite, or in violation of posted instructions.

Tying to Trees -- Do not tie stock directly to trees except for loading, unloading, or short rest breaks while traveling.

Camping Restrictions -- In the Mokelumne Canyon and below Telephone Gulch in the Lower Summit City Canyon camping with overnight recreational stock is restricted to the following areas:

- ◆ In the **Munson Meadow/ Camp Irene/ Lake Valley Corridor** camping with stock is permitted only at Camp Irene and is limited to one stock group at a time.
- ◆ In the **Summit City Canyon** from Telephone Gulch to the end of the maintained system trail where it crosses Summit City Creek.
- ◆ From the **Hermit Valley** trailhead to approximately 1/2 mile below **Deer Creek**.

Feed -- Supplemental weed free feed or processed feed, such as alfalfa pellets or crimped oats must be carried and used.

Round Top Special Interest Area -- Stock is required to remain on trails and no grazing is permitted in the area. This will protect the botanical values for which this area was designated.

CARSON PASS MANAGEMENT AREA (CPMA)

Welcome to the Carson Pass Management Area (CPMA)

The Carson Pass area offers one of the most beautiful and scenic locations in the High Sierra. The Carson Pass Special Management Area is set aside from the rest of the Mokelumne Wilderness because of 2 areas.

- ◇ The Round Top Geologic Area, which has extinct volcanoes. Its glacially sculptured land is evident as one walks the 10 miles of trails in the area.
- ◇ The Round Top Botanical Area. Wildflowers have been blooming each summer for the past 10,000 to 12,000 years. Different soil types and elevation changes will produce wide variety of lush and beautiful wildflowers. The peak season can vary from mid-July to the first week or two in August depending on the previous winter's snowpack.

PERMIT

- ◆ **Required for overnight camping,**
- ◆ **Designated Campsites** - Camping is only allowed at Winnemucca Lake, Round Top Lake, and Fourth of July Lake. All three lakes have designated campsites.
- ◆ **No Reservations** - First come, first served, same day
- ◆ **Maximum Group size** is 8 people.

ALTERNATE CAMPING LOCATION

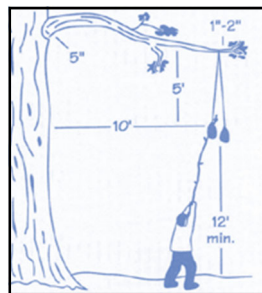
Meiss Meadow - Dispersed camping is allowed on the north side of Highway 88 in the Meiss Meadow area. This area is dog friendly, and does not require a wilderness permit. To use a camp stove or build a campfire, you must have a valid CA campfire permit. For further information for Meiss Meadow, call the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit at (530) 543-2600.



BEARS & OTHER CRITTERS

Bears have extremely keen noses and are attracted to food smells as well as to the scents of personal products such as toothpaste and deodorant. Please remember that the forest is the bear's natural environment. Protect yourself by preventing the unnatural contact of bears with humans by using bear canisters for food storage, or by hanging your food using the counterbalancing method.

- ◇ Balance the weight in food bags equally.
- ◇ Hoist the first sack up.
- ◇ Tie second sack as high on rope as possible, leaving a loop.
- ◇ Push into place with a long stick.
- ◇ Pull down by hooking loop.



Hanging your food will discourage other critters such as Yellow-bellied Marmots from getting your food. Remember to empty your pack of any attractive items. It is a good idea to leave the zippers on your backpack and tent open to allow curious critters a chance to explore without damaging your gear.

DESIGNATED CAMPSITES

- ◆ At Winnemucca there are 3 sites, Round Top 5 sites, and Fourth of July has 6 sites.
- ◆ In winter, camping is not restricted to designated sites once the snowpack is 12 inches deep. Permit is still required

FROG LAKE

Camping is not permitted in order to protect and promote the restoration of the shoreline.

STAY LIMIT

CPMA has a 2 night stay limit from the Friday before Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend.

DOGS

Dogs must always be on a leash and under your control. *Be considerate to other visitors and protect wildlife.*

CAMPFIRES

No campfires, only camp stoves are permissible in the Mokelumne Wilderness with a valid campfire permit.

FEES

- From June 1st - October 31st, Carson Pass, the overflow and Meiss parking areas are \$5.00 per vehicle (cash or check only) to park per day. Payable onsite. A season day use pass can be purchased for \$20.00 that applies to FS operated trailheads.
- From November 1st - May 31st, a CA STATE SNO-PARK PERMIT is required. Not available onsite. Purchase online at: www.ohv.parks.ca.gov/snoparks or at the Amador Ranger District office, cash only, \$5.00 for a day pass or \$25.00 for a season pass. Call for availability.
- Woods Lake trailhead parking area is \$8 (concession operated).

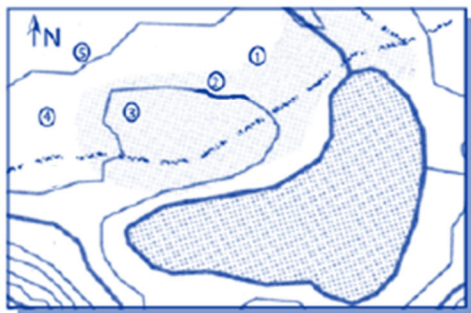
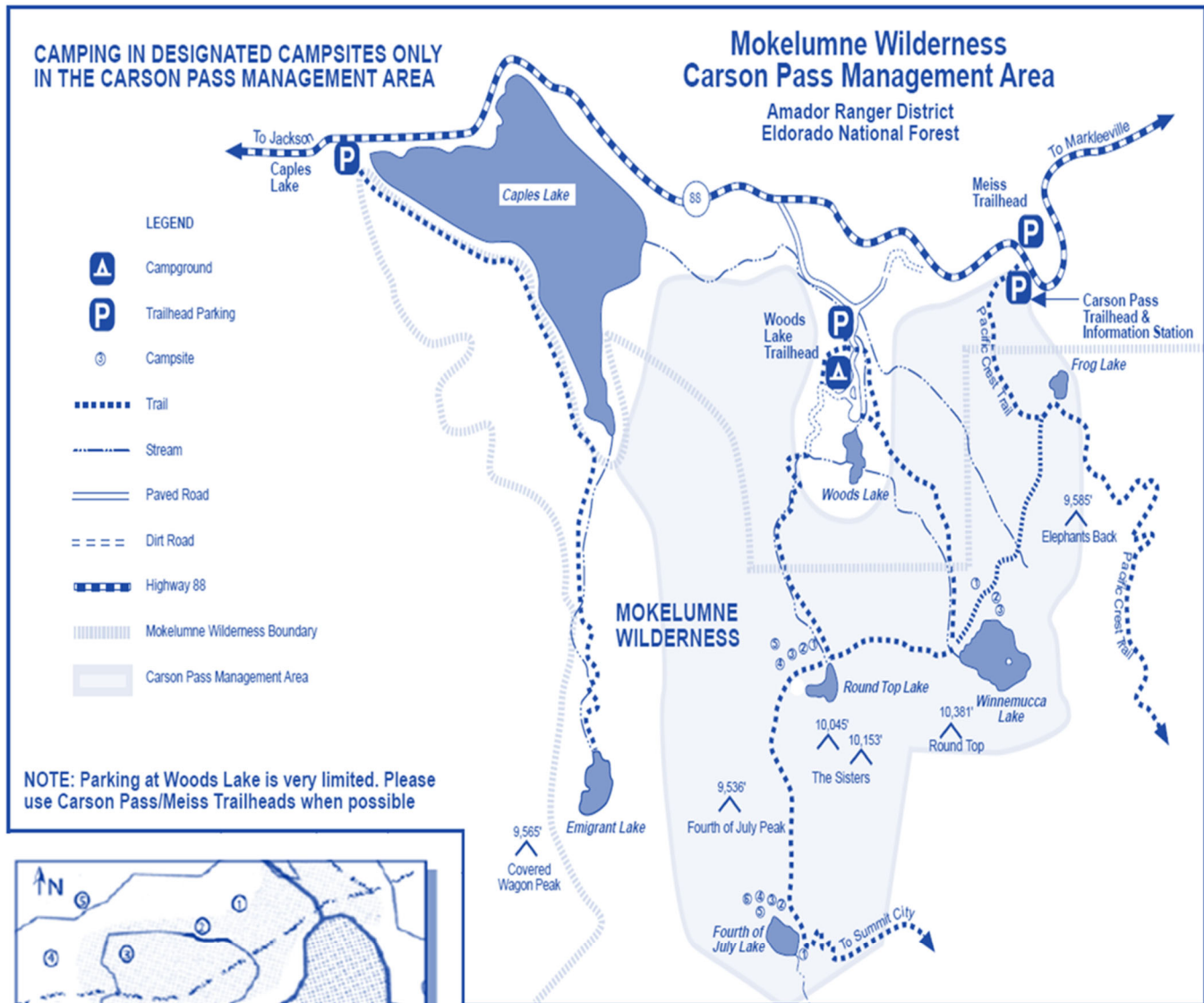
CARSON PASS MANAGEMENT AREA (CPMA)

RESTORATION PROJECTS AND DESIGNATED CAMPSITES

We need your help to protect fragile areas!

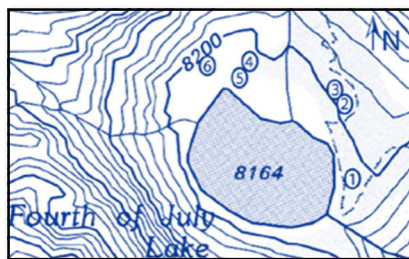


The popularity of some wilderness destinations results in damage to the delicate vegetation around shorelines and meadow areas. To promote the re-vegetation of these areas, specific campsites have been designated at Round Top, Winnemucca and Fourth of July Lakes. Designated campsites within the Carson Pass Management Area are numbered and assigned with your permit on a first-come, first-served basis only. These maps illustrate the locations of the designated sites.

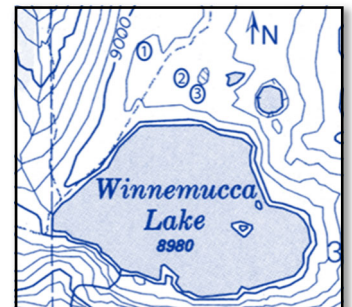


Round Top Lake

At each campsite a numbered wooden post has been placed to identify the site. You must be camped at the site corresponding to your overnight permit for your permit to be valid.



Fourth of July Lake



Winnemucca Lake

DAY USE IN THE MOKELUMNE WILDERNESS

OVER 100 MILES OF HIKING TRAILS WILL TAKE YOU FROM DEEP CANYONS TO 10,000-FOOT PEAKS.

Although day use permits are not required, there are rules and regulations to follow to help maintain the wilderness area to keep it wild. Wilderness areas are meant to protect the fragile ecosystems, to reduce visual and environmental impacts and to help maintain healthy water sources.



Round Top Botanical Area

For thousands of years the wildflowers have been blooming seasonally in the Round Top Botanical Area. Different soil types combine with varying elevations, exposures, and snow depths to produce an impressive collection of plant life in this special area at the junction of three botanical provinces. Whether it is the wildflower season or not, there is a fascinating world of plants to discover here.



Round Top Geologic Area

Extinct volcanoes and glacially sculpted land are some of the clues to the past that you will encounter on your journey through the Round Top Geologic Area. Dramatic changes to the landscape have occurred here for over two hundred million years. Evidence of these changes is visible from the ten miles of trails leading through the area.

The Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) runs right past the Carson Pass station. Experience the unique adventure of hiking from Mexico to Canada along the PCT (www.pcta.org). Thru-Hikes will only be written from Mokelumne Wilderness to Tuolumne Meadows.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

PERMIT

No permit for day use, only overnight camping.

MECHANIZED AND MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT IS PROHIBITED.

No bicycles, vehicles, hand gliders, over-snow vehicles, strollers, chainsaws, or game carts.

DAMAGING OR REMOVING ANY NATURAL OR HISTORIC FEATURE IS NOT ALLOWED

Please leave wildflowers and historical relics for all to enjoy and avoid trampling delicate lakeshore vegetation.

PLEASE USE LEAVE NO TRACE ETHICS

Pack out what you pack in, including toilet paper if you do not bury it.

DOGS MUST BE ON A LEASH

Dogs off-leash can threaten wildlife or present a hazard to the safety or convenience of other visitors. Handlers must physically restrain their dogs on a leash less than six feet throughout the duration of their visit.

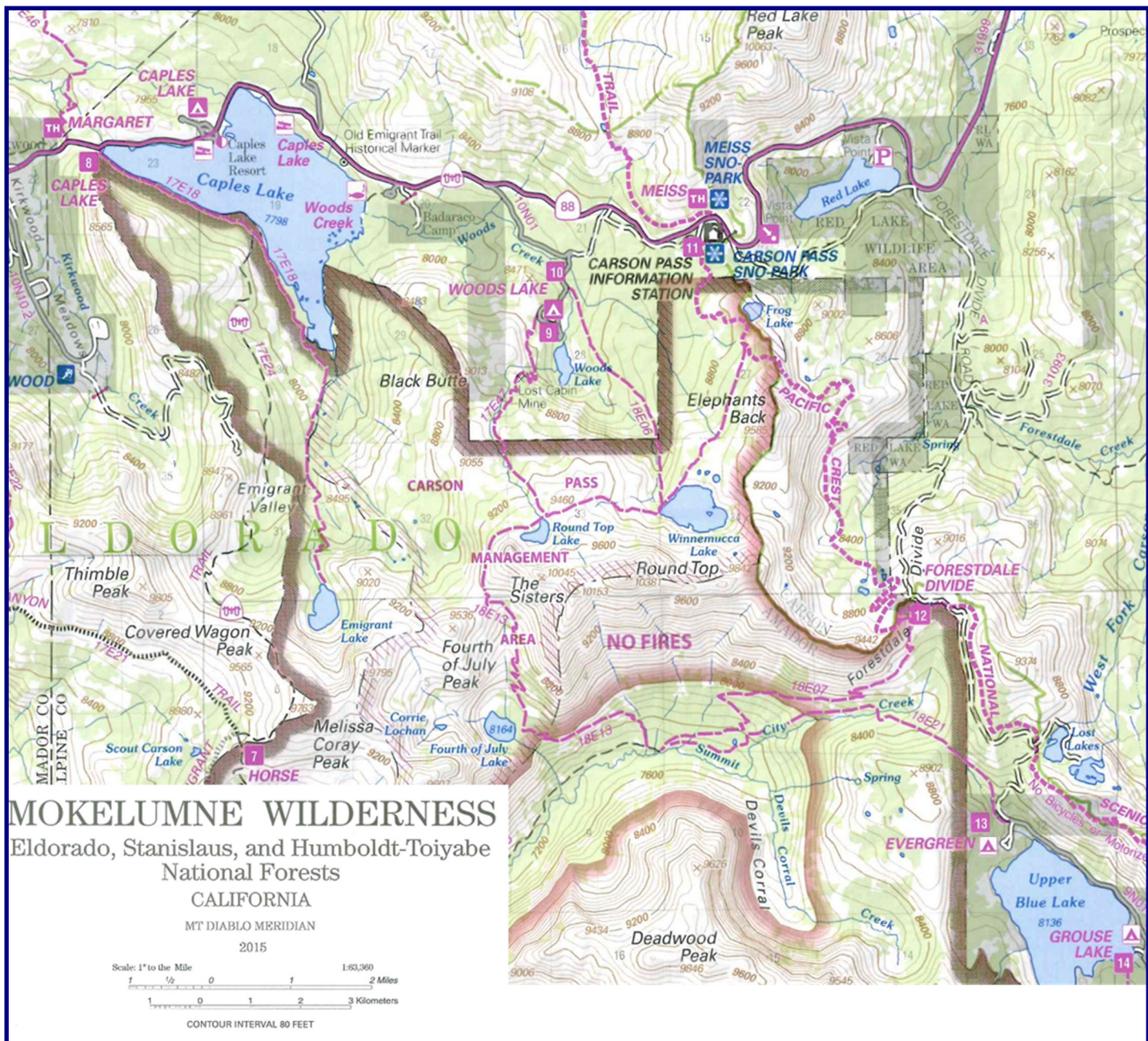
GROUP SIZE

12 person maximum for day hiking.

FEES

- From **June 1st - October 31st**, Carson Pass, the overflow and Meiss parking areas are \$5.00 per vehicle (cash or check only) to park per day. Payable onsite. A season day use pass can be purchased for \$20.00 that applies to FS operated trailheads.
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HIKING THE CARSON PASS MANAGEMENT AREA



CARSON PASS HIKING TRAILS

18E13 Carson Pass Trailhead to Winnemucca Lake

2.5 miles

An easy hike with great vistas and pristine glacial lakes. This trail passes through a spectacular wildflower display which reaches its peak in mid-July to August.

18E13 Winnemucca Lake to Round Top Lake

1 mile

A steeper trail into higher elevations approaching Round Top Peak. Excellent photo opportunities of the surrounding landscape and hardy, windblown alpine and subalpine plant species.

18E06 Woods Lake Trailhead to Winnemucca Lake

2.0 miles

This moderate hike leads you into the cool forest and opens up to magnificent, flowering meadows in mid-July and August.

17E47 Woods Lake Trailhead to Round Top Lake

2.0 miles

(Lost Cabin Mine Trail)
This steeper trail weaves along a creek through red fir forests with scattered open rocky areas.

17E24 Caples Trailhead to Emigrant Lake

4.3 miles

The longest trail meanders gently along the shore of Caples Lake, climbing slightly through mixed rocky and forested areas, ending with a steeper ascent to grassy meadows surrounding Emigrant Lake.