

# Backcountry Commercial Services

The National Park Service Concessions Improvement Act of 1998 9 (PL105-391) provides for services that **are necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment ...and are consistent to the highest practicable degree with the preservation of and conservation of the resources and values of the park unit.**

NPS Management Policies (2006., 6.4.4) allow wilderness-oriented commercial services that contribute to public education and visitor enjoyment of wilderness values if they meet the “necessary and appropriate” tests of the NPS Concessions Improvement Act and section 4(d)(6) of the Wilderness Act which **allows commercial services in wilderness to the extent necessary for realizing the recreational or other wilderness purposes of the area.**

## Commercial Services That Meet Law & Policy Criteria

Backcountry Activity	To What Extent are Services Necessary?	Type of Authorization
Overnight Backpacking	Limited number of permits by Zone No commercial use in Wild Zone	Contracts and CUA
Day Hiking	Specified Trails & Distances No commercial use in Wild Zone	CUA
Bicycling	Non-wilderness roads open to vehicles	CUA
Vehicle Tours	Daily limits Tuweep only	CUA

Commercial extended day use (rim to rim hiking and running), canyoneering, climbing, and RABT (packrafting) will not be permitted. Insufficient data exists to determine the extent of impacts on resources and visitor experience, and to better understand conflicts with other user groups. The NPS will continue to collect data on non-commercial uses; and such data may be used in future planning to review this determination.

## Concession Contracts & Permits

Commercial overnight backpacking would be primarily authorized by concession contracts as opposed to the current commercial use authorizations (CUAs). CUAs would continue to be issued for operators doing up to 3 trips per year. Concession contracts can provide more consistent visitor service, and increased NPS oversight of resource stewardship. Contract terms would be 10 years compared to the 2-year CUA.

Backcountry permits for concessioners would be granted one year in advance (percentage varies by alternative). CUA holders would continue to compete with the non-commercial public to obtain backcountry permits four months in advance.

Overall, the percentage of commercial use is projected to be the same as current conditions.

Concessioners, CUA holders and GCFI would be subject to operating requirements (See Appendix F.)