



Wilderness Stewardship Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

Preliminary Draft Alternatives Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

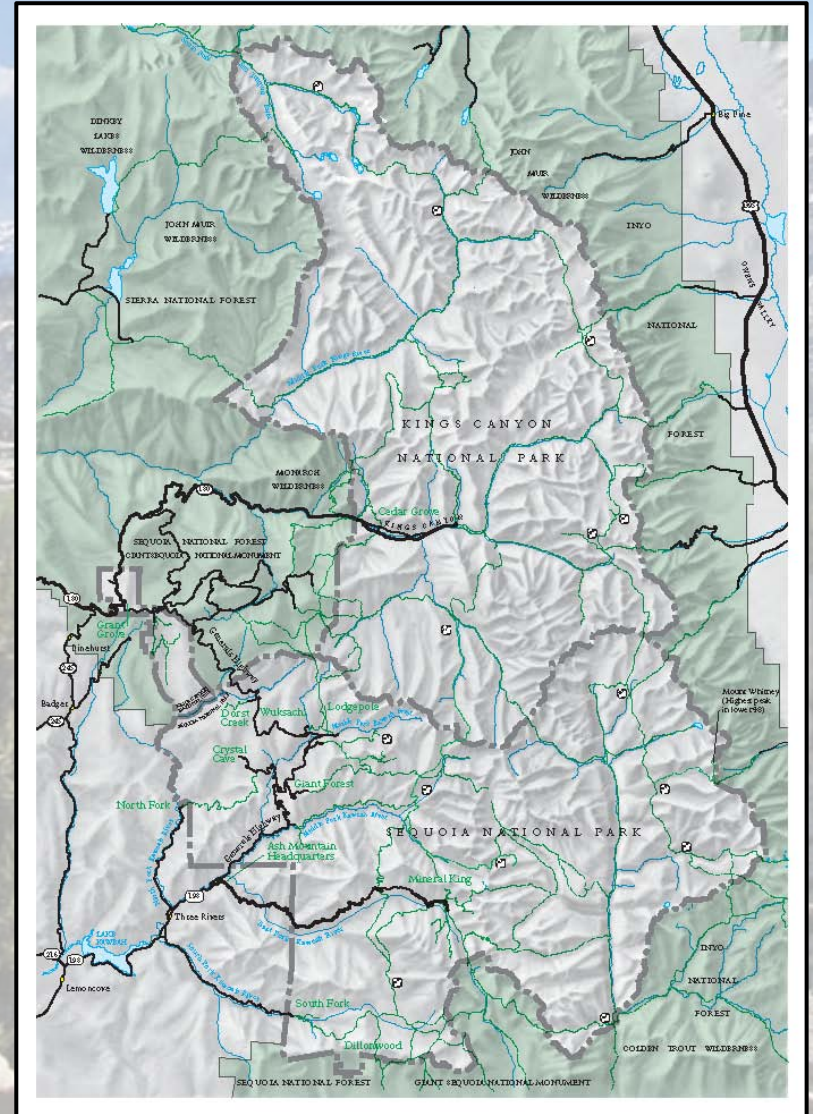
October 3 – November 19, 2012

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Gregg Fauth, Wilderness Coordinator
Nancy Hendricks, Environmental Protection Specialist
Mark Husbands – Washington Office, Project Manager



Meeting Overview

- Purpose of the Wilderness Stewardship Plan (WSP)
- Background of wilderness planning and process
- Actions common to all alternatives
- Review of the alternatives
- How to comment and where to find more information
- Questions





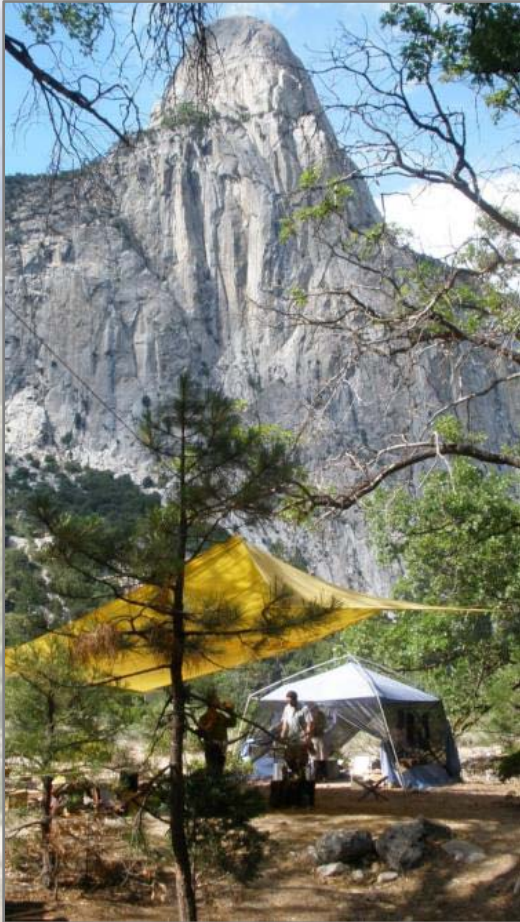
Why a Wilderness Stewardship Plan?

- The California Wilderness Act of 1984 designated much of these parks as wilderness. The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 designated the John Krebs Wilderness and expanded wilderness acreage.
- Currently the parks operate under the 1986 Backcountry Management Plan (BMP) and Stock Use and Meadow Management Plan (SUMMP).
- The parks' General Management Plan (2007) calls for development of a wilderness stewardship plan.





Today, over 96% of parks' total acreage is managed as wilderness (808,079 acres is designated wilderness; 29,500 acres is managed as wilderness per NPS policies).





Related Laws and Policies

- Multiple laws and policies provide direction. These include:
 - NPS Organic Act of 1916
 - Wilderness Act (1964)
 - Redwoods Act (1978)
 - Parks designating legislation
 - National Environmental Policy Act
 - National Historic Preservation Act
 - ...and others
- The Sequoia and Kings Canyon Backcountry Access Act (2012) provides for continuation of commercial stock services within the parks' wilderness for 3 years, and directs the NPS to complete a WSP by June 5, 2015.





Purpose and Need for the WSP

The purpose of the Wilderness Stewardship Plan is to establish a framework for management of wilderness in these parks in order to preserve the wilderness character and provide opportunities for access and use in accordance with the Wilderness Act and other laws and policies.

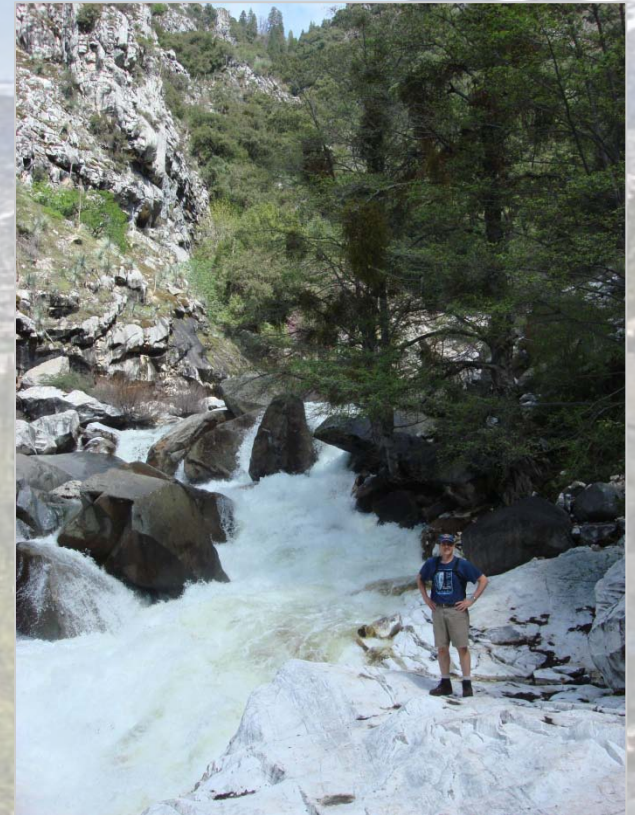


The Wilderness Stewardship Plan is needed to establish goals and objectives for wilderness management. The plan will identify desired conditions, resource indicators, and actions which may be taken to manage impacts on wilderness.



Objectives of the WSP

- Preserve wilderness character.
- Provide opportunities for primitive recreation (in accordance with the Wilderness Act).
- Improve conditions where there may be unacceptable levels of impact to wilderness character.
- Protect the natural and cultural resources within wilderness.





Goals of the Wilderness Act

The Wilderness Act states that these areas

“shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired...as wilderness...

and ...

to provide for...the preservation of their wilderness character...”





Wilderness Character Qualities

- Untrammled – essentially unhindered and free from the actions of modern human control or manipulation
- Natural – ecological systems are substantially free from the effects of modern civilization
- Undeveloped – retains its primeval character and influence, and is essentially without permanent improvement or modern human occupation





Wilderness Character Qualities

- Solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation
– provides outstanding opportunities for primitive wilderness-based activities.
- Other - features such as archeological resources or historic structures, whose contributions to wilderness character are not captured by the other four qualities.



*Preserving wilderness character is our mission,
by law and policy.*



Where are we now?

- Notice of Intent (NOI) published April 26, 2011.
- Public scoping was held from April 11 – August 31.
 - Five public meetings were held.
 - Interagency and tribal meetings were held.
- More than 900 pieces of correspondence received with a wide spectrum of opinions.
- Comments were used to identify key topics to be addressed in the WSP.





Preliminary Draft Alternatives

- We are developing management alternatives to meet our planning objectives and address public interests.
- Some topics brought forward are addressed by existing laws, regulations, and policies.
- Some actions may be the same across all alternatives.
- This presentation provides an *overview* of the alternatives. The detailed description of alternatives is available online at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/sekiwild>



Actions Common to All Alternatives

Education and Interpretation

A wilderness education and interpretation plan will be developed.





Actions Common to All Alternatives

Cultural Resources

Archaeological sites, historic structures, and ethnographic resources will continue to be managed in accordance with law, including the National Historic Preservation Act.





Actions Common to All Alternatives

Resource Stewardship and Science

The WSP will support the continuation of science and resource stewardship in wilderness, using methods that preserve the qualities of wilderness character.





Other Topics that will be Addressed

- Cooperative management
- Related laws, regulations, and policies
- Related planning efforts
- Potential Wilderness Additions
- Minimum Requirement Analysis process
- Overflights and air tours
- Wilderness communications
- External issues and stressors
- Emergency operations
- Climbing
- Accessibility
- Technology
- Winter use





Actions Common to All Alternatives - Zoning

Zone	Description
Zone A	Areas and trail corridors proximate to non-wilderness areas (within 1 mile of roads, and trail corridors within approximately 6 miles of the trailheads). Examples include the Mist Falls, Little Baldy, Watchtower/Heather Lake, and Ladybug trail corridors.
Zone B	Includes high use major trail corridors and administrative and visitor developments, such as ranger stations, bridges, and food storage lockers. Trails are highly developed and regularly maintained. Examples include the John Muir, High Sierra, and Pacific Crest trail corridors.
Zone C	Includes lower use trail corridors that are generally less developed. There are fewer administrative and visitor developments. Examples include Taboose Pass to Bench Lake, Kennedy Canyon, and Upper Ranger Meadow to Elizabeth Pass trail corridors.
Zone D	Areas that do not contain maintained trails and generally do not include administrative or visitor facilities. Examples include Miter Basin, Lamarck Col/Darwin Canyon, Baxter Pass, and New Army Pass to Mount Langley summit.

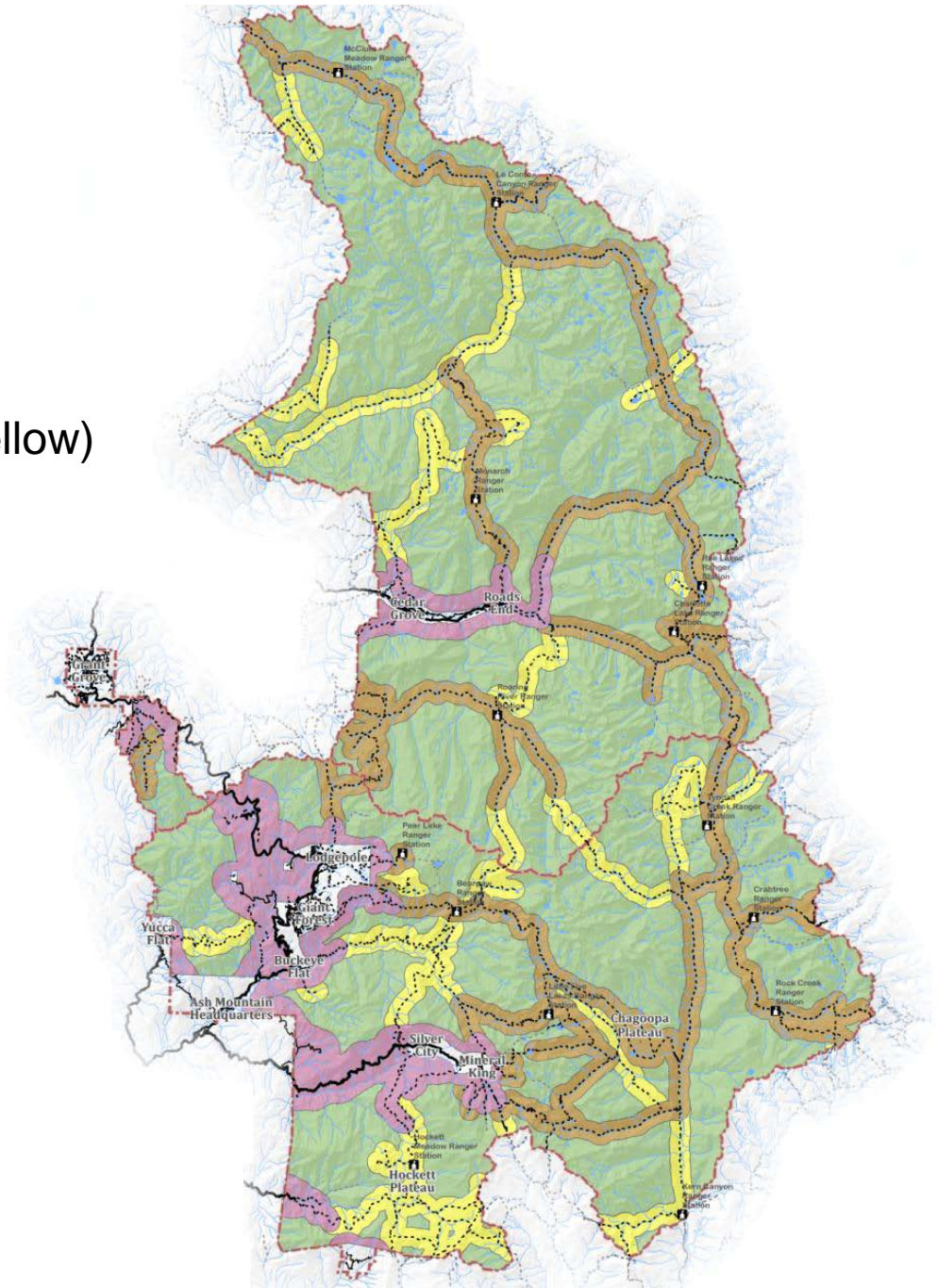
Management Zones

Zone A Day use (pink)

Zone B Major trail corridors (brown)

Zone C Secondary trail corridors (yellow)

Zone D Untrailed (green)





Preliminary Draft Alternatives Concepts

Alternative 1 – No action. Current management practices continue.

Alternative 2 – Protect wilderness character while accommodating increased visitor use and allowing for expanded facilities for visitor / administrative support.

Alternative 3 – Protect wilderness character by balancing visitor access, development, and restrictions.

Alternative 4 – Protect wilderness character and reduce need for development by decreasing visitor access and increasing restrictions.

Alternative 5 – Substantially reduce development and protect wilderness character by reducing visitor use and increasing restrictions.

Alternative 6 – Provide for the most unconstrained wilderness experience and protect wilderness character by significantly reducing visitor access.



Key Topics

- Permitting/Quotas
- Trails, bridges, and signs
- Campfires
- Food storage
- Human-waste management
- Party size
- Campsites
- Night limits
- Stock (horses, mules, burros, llamas)
- Grazing
- Administrative facilities
- Other facilities
- Supporting frontcountry facilities
- Commercial services





Key Topics

Permitting and Quotas

Permits would be required for overnight use and considered for day use.

Specific entry quotas would be developed.

Destination quotas would be considered for selected areas.





Key Topics

Trails

A trail management plan will be developed to establish a trail inventory and determine maintenance standards and signage.

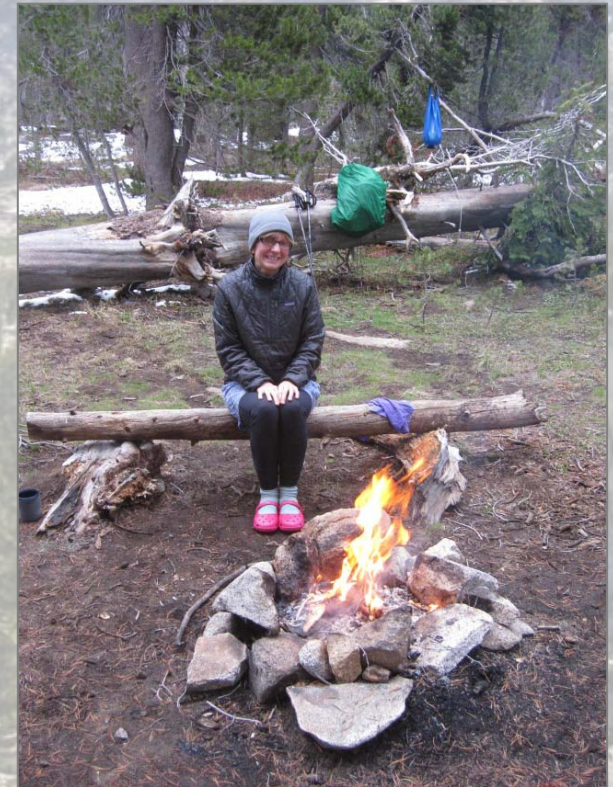




Key Topics

Campfires

Alternatives include elevational fire limits and increasing and reducing campfire restrictions.





Key Topics

Food Storage

Alternatives consider a range of food-storage options that provide resource protection by preventing wildlife from obtaining human food.





Key Topics

Party Size – Hikers and Stock Groups

The size of groups traveling and/or camping together would be managed to preserve opportunities for solitude and to reduce adverse impacts on the natural character of wilderness.



The number of people, the number of stock, and the combined group size would be limited to manage impacts.





Key Topics

Campsites

Campsites would be managed to provide opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, and to preserve the natural quality of wilderness character, while limiting development.



Alternatives will be considered to address hiker and stock user conflict, and to minimize impacts from camps, including establishing camps and requiring their use, recommending the use of previously established camps, and removing and restoring some existing camps.



Key Topics



Stock (horses, mules, burros, llamas)
Alternatives consider constraints on stock travel for resource protection and to minimize conflicts between users.

Grazing

Options for recreational and administrative grazing are considered, including expanding the existing meadow management program, setting elevation limits on grazing, and prohibiting grazing overall.





Key Topics

Administrative Support Facilities

Ranger stations and crew camps are used by park staff to administer the wilderness. Alternatives for adding, removing, or modifying existing stations/camps are considered.





Key Topics

Other Facilities/Non-Conforming Uses

Redwood Canyon cabin and cache

Pear Lake Ski Hut (winter lodging)

Bearpaw Meadow High Sierra Camp





Key Topics

Commercial Services

A specialized finding of the extent of commercial services necessary to meet the purposes of wilderness will be completed (Extent Necessary Determination).

If commercial services are found to be necessary, alternatives could include retaining, increasing, or reducing existing commercial uses, authorizing new types of services, and/or restricting services geographically or by time.





How to Provide Comments

- Submit written comments today on comment sheet, or
- Online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/sekiwild> or,
- Mail or fax comments to:
Karen F. Taylor-Goodrich, Superintendent
ATTN: Wilderness Stewardship Plan Preliminary Draft
Alternatives
Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks
47050 Generals Highway, Three Rivers, CA 93271-9700
Fax: (559) 565-4202

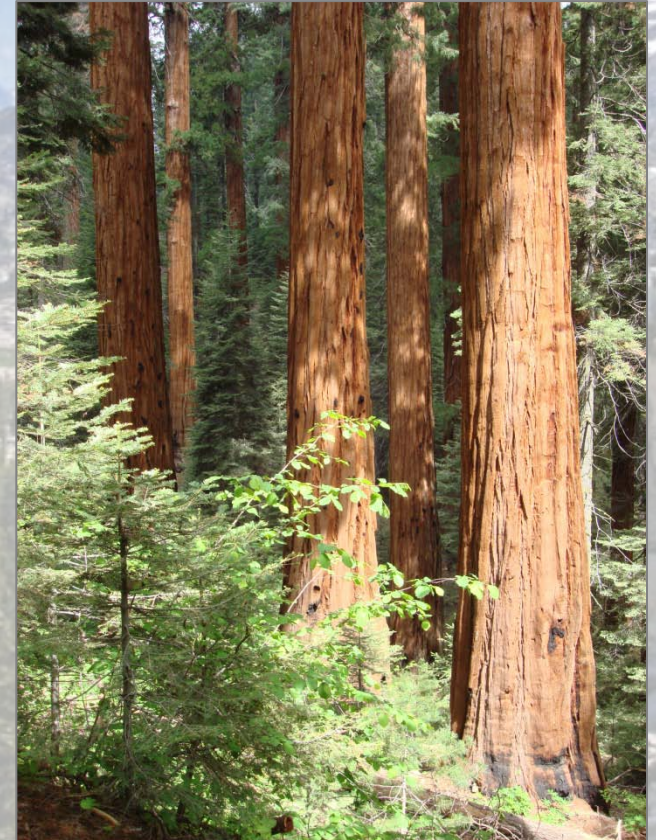
Submit written comments by November 19, 2012.



Questions to Consider When Commenting

- Have any key topics been missed?
- Does each topic have a sufficient range of alternatives?
- What do you like about the alternatives?
- Are there specific parts of an alternative that should be changed?

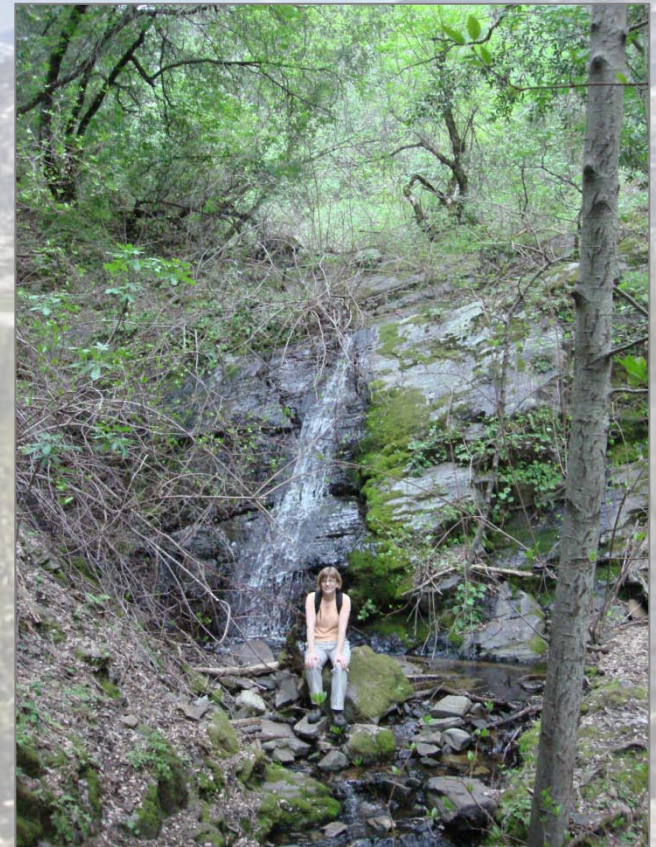
If yes, how would you change them?





Next Steps for Preliminary Draft Alternatives

- We will use your comments to refine the alternatives.
- Alternatives may change substantially. Entire alternatives or components may be added or removed.
- We will be presenting refined alternatives and selecting the management-preferred alternative in the draft WSP.





Planning Timeline

Tentative Dates	Planning Phase
Fall 2012	Public Review of Preliminary Draft Alternatives
Winter 2012 - Fall 2013	Refine Draft Alternatives and Prepare Draft WSP/EIS
Fall 2013 – Winter 2014	Public Review of Draft WSP/EIS
Spring 2014	Analysis of Public Comment on Draft WSP/EIS
Summer 2014	Prepare Final WSP/EIS
Fall 2014	Release Final WSP/EIS
Spring 2015	Record of Decision



Questions and Discussion

