

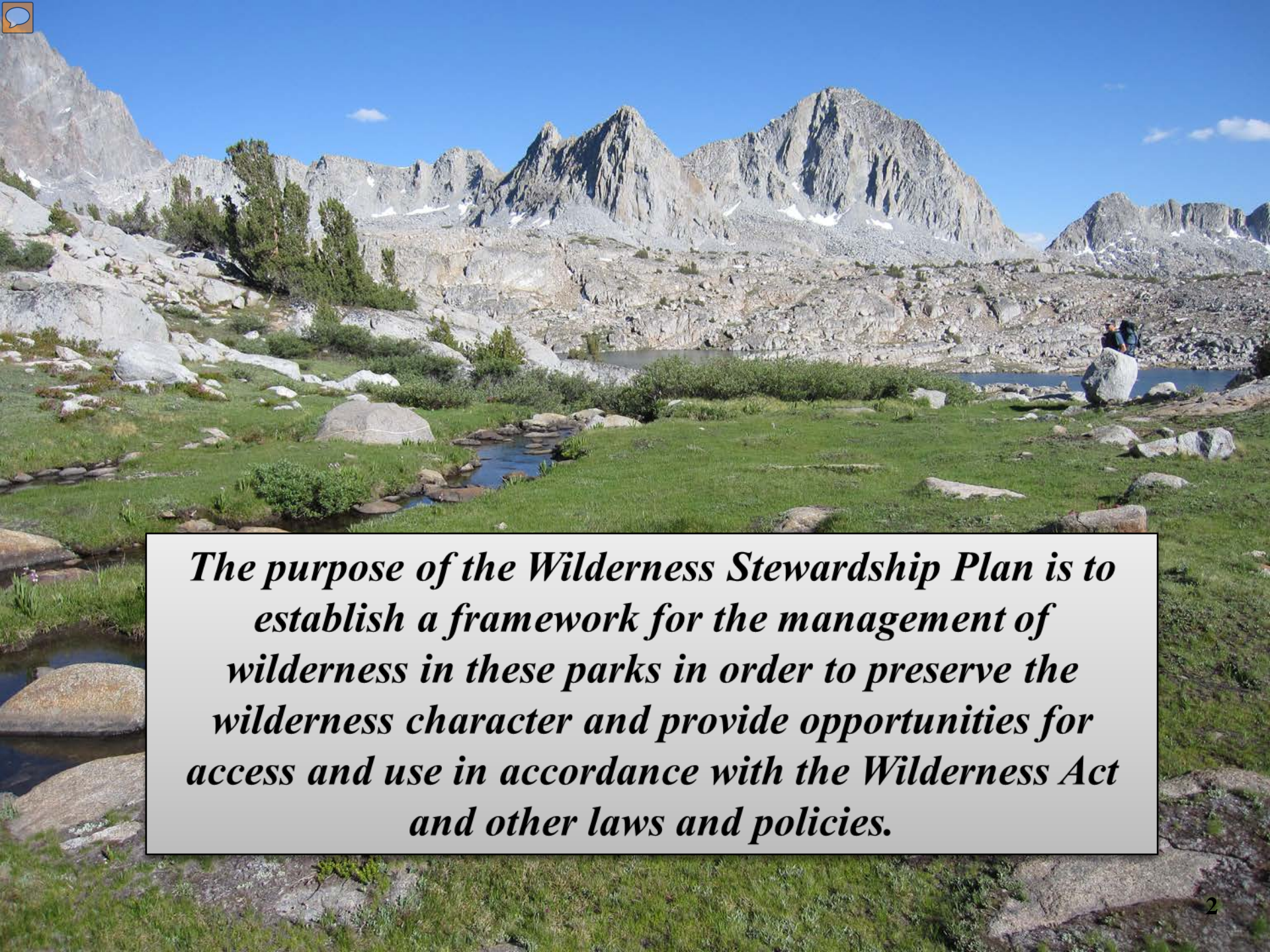


# Wilderness Stewardship Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

## Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

**Public Webinar - August 14, 2014**





*The purpose of the Wilderness Stewardship Plan is to establish a framework for the 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.*





## Planning objectives:

- Preserve wilderness character;
- Provide opportunities and encourage public use and enjoyment of wilderness in accordance with the Wilderness Act and other laws and policies;
- Improve conditions in areas where there may be unacceptable levels of impacts on wilderness character; and
- Protect the natural and cultural resources within wilderness.



## **Alternative 2 – NPS Preferred Alternative**

**Implement site-specific actions to reduce recreational impacts to wilderness character**

**Recognizes that *current management is meeting the goal to protect wilderness character*. Thus no significant shifts in management direction are proposed.**

**Management would be modified in specific areas where impacts to wilderness character are occurring now, or potentially could occur in the future (based on resource sensitivity) to solve site-specific problems.**

***Our overall goal is to encourage wilderness use while preserving wilderness character.***





## **Elements of the Alternatives**

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- 1 – Visitor Use Levels**
- 2 – Access**
- 3 - Campfires**
- 4 – Food Storage**
- 5 – Human Waste Management**
- 6 – Party Size**
- 7 – Camping/Campsites and Night Limits**
- 8 – Stock Access and Travel**
- 9 – Administrative Structures and Facilities**
- 10 – Frontcountry Facilities that Support Wilderness Use**
- 11 – Commercial Services**



# Element 1 – Visitor-use Levels

Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Quotas	All overnight visitors subject to trailhead quotas	All overnight visitors subject to trailhead quotas
Entry Permits	Required for overnight use	Required for overnight use
Destination Quotas	Emerald and Pear Lakes	Emerald and Pear + additional destination quotas in the future if conditions warrant





# Element 1 – Visitor-use Levels

Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Visitor Capacity (Overnight)	134,000 Visitor Use Days	134,000 Visitor Use Days
Encounter Standards	None	Trail Encounters – People Encountered per hour







## Element 2 - Trails

**We will partially adopt the U.S. Forest Service system of trail development class (Class 1, 2, or 3).**

<b>Class 1: minimally developed</b>	<b>112 miles</b>
<b>Class 2: moderately developed</b>	<b>288 miles</b>
<b>Class 3: developed</b>	<b>294 miles</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>695 miles</b>







## Element 3 - Campfires

No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred – Alternative 2
Allowed in: 398,829 acres	Allowed in : 395,710 acres
10,000 feet – San Joaquin, Kings  10,400 feet Kern	10,000 feet – San Joaquin, Kings, Kern
9,000 feet - Kaweah	9,000 feet – Kaweah and Tule
Additional site specific restrictions	Site specific restrictions and variances





# Element 4 – Food Storage

**Food storage boxes were placed in the wilderness in the late 1980s to protect native wildlife by preventing them from obtaining human food.**

Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Food-storage boxes	87	48 retained 13 additional would be evaluated for removal
Portable containers required	Dusy Basin, Rae Lakes Loop, and Rock Creek areas	Required for overnight use at North Dome, Dusy Basin, Rae Lakes Loop, and Rock Creek areas





## Element 5 – Human Waste Management

**Privies and restrooms protect the natural quality of wilderness and protect solitude. Privies and restrooms in unsuitable locations or where other methods are proven successful would be removed.**

Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Restrooms at Emerald and Pear Lakes	2	2 (consider removal prior to major repairs or renovation)
Privies - total	34	26 (includes adding a privy at Rock Creek)
Pack Out Waste Kits	Recommended for Mt. Whitney area	May be required in certain areas.





## Element 6 –Party Size

Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Party Size – Day Use Hikers	25	<b>25</b>
Party Size – Overnight Use On Trail Hikers	15	<b>15</b>
Party Size – Overnight Use Off Trail Hikers	15	<b>12</b>





## Element 6 –Party Size

Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Party Size – Day Use Stock	25 people 20 stock 45 combined	<b>20 people</b> <b>20 stock</b> <b>40 combined</b>
Party Size – Overnight Use On Trail	15 people 20 stock 35 combined	<b>15 people</b> <b>20 stock</b> <b>28 combined</b>
Party Size – Overnight Use Off Trail	15 people 20 stock 35 combined	<b>12 people</b> <b>12 stock</b> <b>14 combined</b>





# Element 7 – Camping/campsites and Night Limits

Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Designated Sites	Established at Paradise Valley, Emerald and Pear Lakes, and Bearpaw	Lower Paradise, Emerald and Pear Lakes, and Bearpaw. Additional sites/areas may be established in the future.
Close-in Camping	Prohibited	Allowed in specific close in areas
Night Limits	14 consecutive nights 21 total nights/trip 63 total nights/year	14 consecutive nights 25 total nights/trip 75 total nights/year







# Element 8 – Stock Use

- On-trail travel
- Off-trail travel
- Stock grazing
- Grazing management
- Stock-related facilities







# Stock Use – On-trail travel



Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Stock use – On Trail	<b>636</b> miles maintained <b>78</b> miles unmaintained	<b>653</b> miles maintained
Stock Use – Open for Overnight Use	<b>531</b> miles maintained <b>66</b> miles unmaintained	<b>534</b> miles maintained
Closed to Stock	11 miles maintained	42 miles maintained





# Stock Use – Off-trail travel

Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Stock use – Off trail	<p>Stock use is allowed to travel off-trail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- on the Monarch Divide including Hotel Creek</li><li>- in the Roaring River area</li><li>- on the Hockett Plateau</li><li>- along the western side of the Kern River watershed south from the Chagoopa Plateau</li></ul>	<p>Stock use would be allowed to travel off-trail in the same areas as current conditions except off-trail travel would be prohibited in the <i>lower Big Arroyo and in Hotel Creek.</i></p>

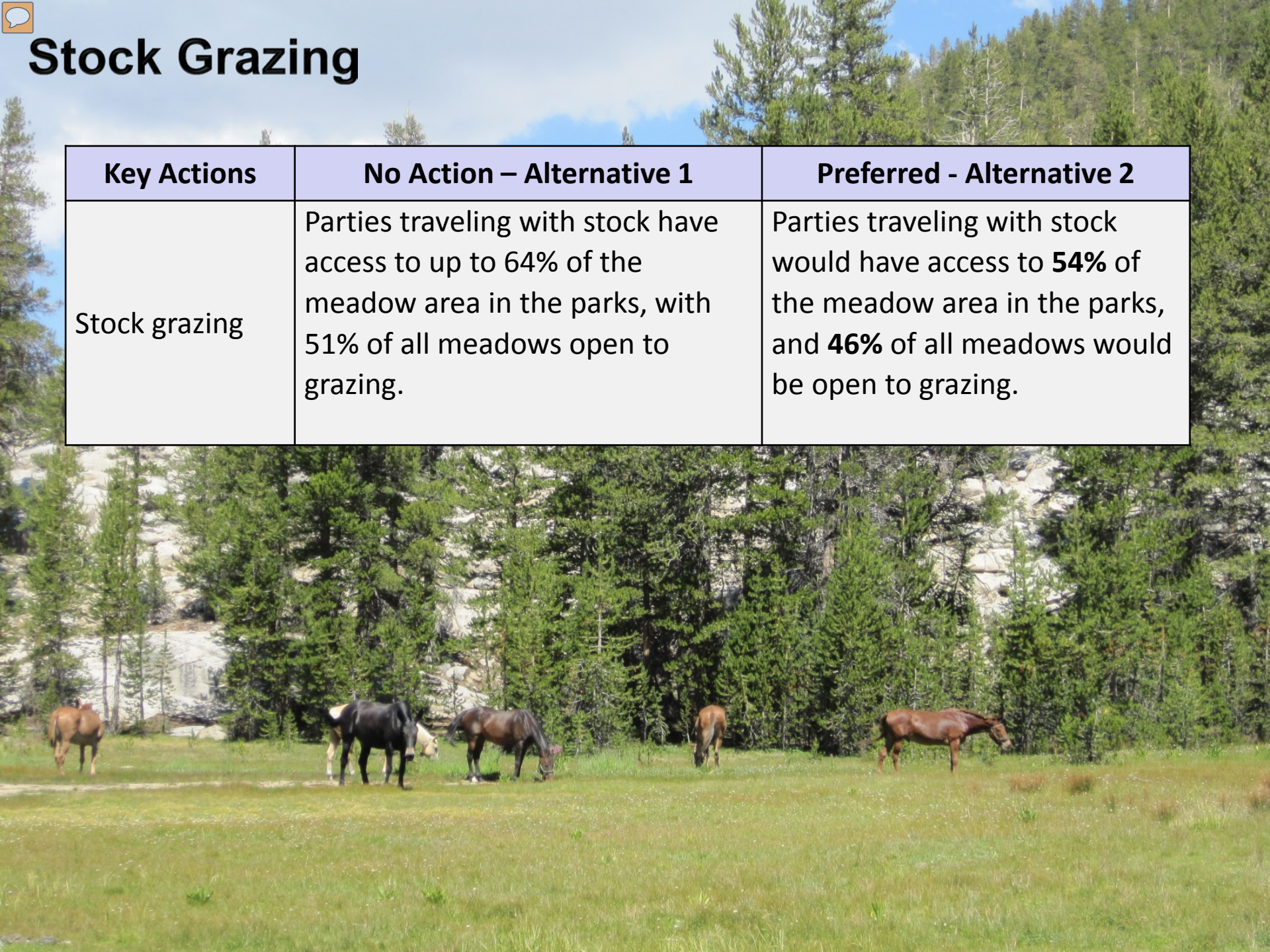




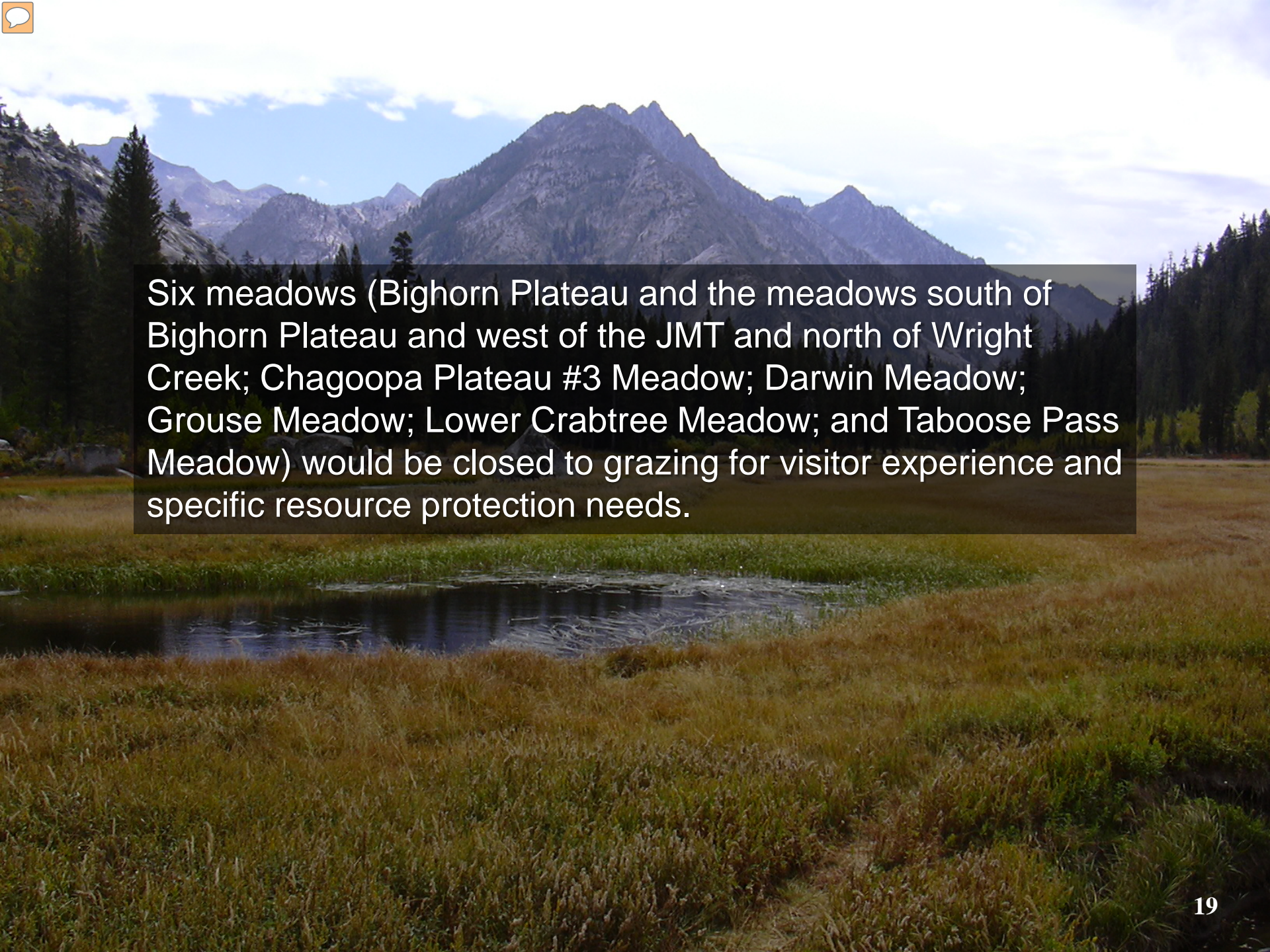


# Stock Grazing

Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Stock grazing	Parties traveling with stock have access to up to 64% of the meadow area in the parks, with 51% of all meadows open to grazing.	Parties traveling with stock would have access to <b>54%</b> of the meadow area in the parks, and <b>46%</b> of all meadows would be open to grazing.





A scenic landscape photograph showing a meadow with a small pond in the foreground. The meadow is filled with tall, dry grass and some green patches. In the background, there are several jagged, rocky mountain peaks under a cloudy sky. A dense forest of evergreen trees is visible on the left and right sides of the meadow.

Six meadows (Bighorn Plateau and the meadows south of Bighorn Plateau and west of the JMT and north of Wright Creek; Chagoopa Plateau #3 Meadow; Darwin Meadow; Grouse Meadow; Lower Crabtree Meadow; and Taboose Pass Meadow) would be closed to grazing for visitor experience and specific resource protection needs.



# Stock Grazing Management

**Current methods (e.g., monitoring to determine opening dates, head limits and night limits, and temporary closures) would continue to be used to manage grazing.**

**Where grazing is allowed, specific grazing capacities would be established for each open meadow.**

**Whenever supplemental feed is provided in lieu of or in addition to grazing, commercially processed pellets, rolled grains, or fermented hay products would be required.**





# Drift fences, gates, and related facilities

No Action Alternative 1	Preferred – Alternative 2
Current developments in wilderness to help control animals and prevent resource impacts include 52 hitch rails and 54 drift fences, pasture fences, and gates	23 hitch rails would be removed and 29 would be retained.  12 fences/ gates would be removed and 42 would be retained.







## Element 9 - Administrative Facilities

**Administrative structures and developments would be the minimum necessary for the administration of wilderness.**

**Slight reduction in number of administrative structures:**

- **Monarch administrative site converted to a camp**
- **Redwood Canyon Research Cabin would be removed**
- **Facilities at long-term trail crew camps would be reduced**





## Element 10 - Frontcountry Facilities



**The Cedar Grove Pack Station would continue to operate as a contracted concession service. Improvements could be made to the Cedar Grove Pack Station.**

**The Wolverton Pack Station could be reopened as a contracted concession service.**

**The Mineral King Pack Station would not be reopened as a concessions operation but could be used by CUA holders and others.**





## Element 11 - Commercial Services

Under the Special Provisions section of the Wilderness Act, in §4(d)(5), it states that

**“Commercial services may be performed within the wilderness areas designated by this Act to the extent necessary for activities which are proper for realizing the recreational or other wilderness purposes of the areas.”**

The “purposes” referred to in §4(d)(5) are those enumerated in §4(b), which states that **“...wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of *recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use.*”**







# Commercial Services – Extent Necessary Determination

## 1. Proper Activities in Wilderness

## 2. Extent to which commercial services are necessary to support the proper activities

## 3. Proposed allocation for Commercial Service Days

- **Wilderness-wide**
  - **Stock services**
  - **Non-stock services**
- **Mount Whitney Management Area**
  - **Stock services**
  - **Non-stock services**

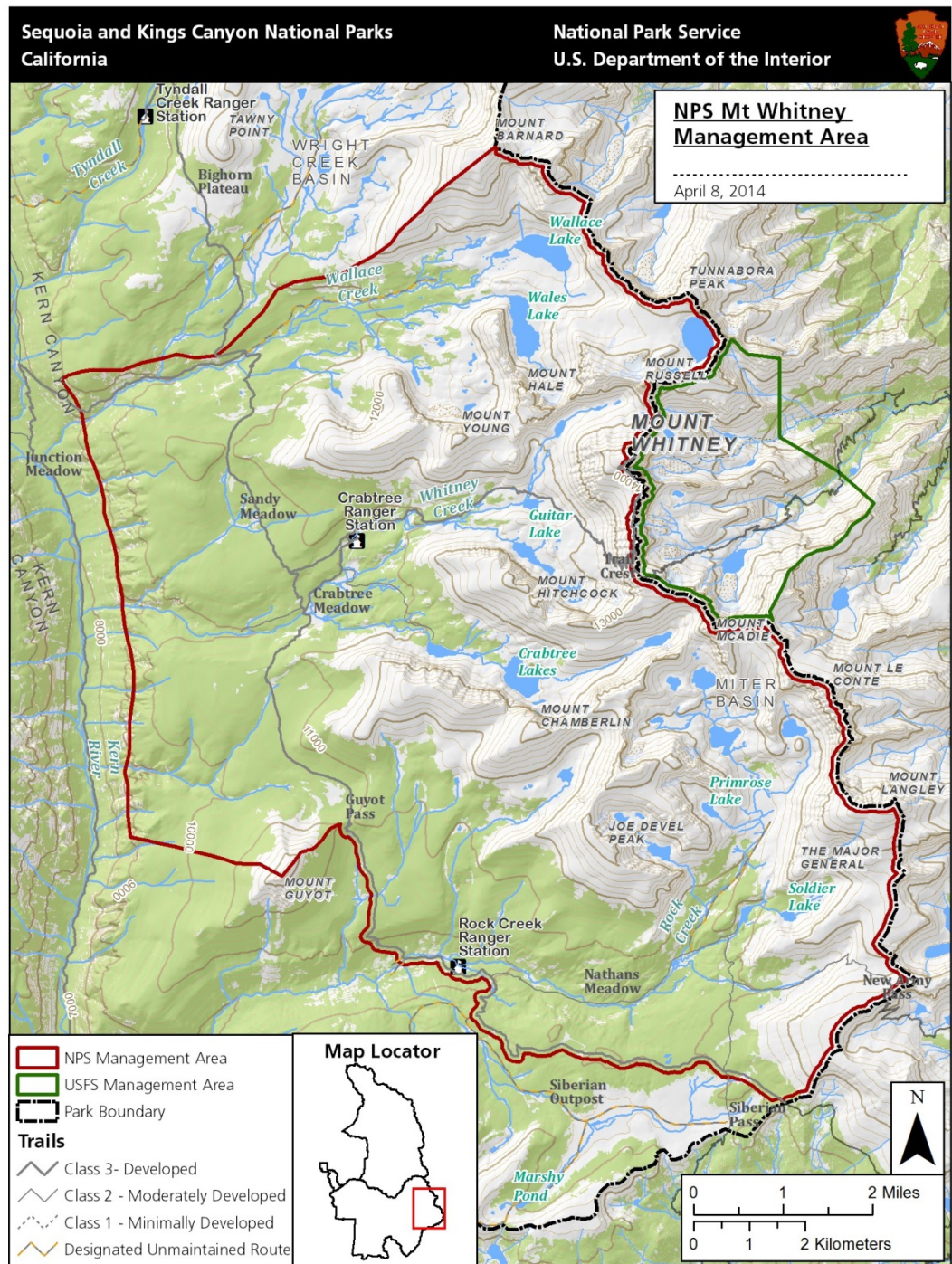







# Mount Whitney Management Area

25% of the commercial use in the parks occurs in 4.5% of the land area.





 Key Actions	No Action – Alternative 1	Preferred - Alternative 2
Commercial Service Days – Total	6,532 (average)	<b>8,400</b>
Commercial Service Days - Stock	2,877 (average)	<b>3,360</b>
Commercial Service Days Mt Whitney Management Area	863* – Non-stock supported  551* – Stock supported (*based on 3-yr avg)	<b>930 – Non-stock supported</b>  <b>550 – Stock supported</b>







## Commercial Facilities



The existing High Sierra Camp at Bearpaw Meadow would be retained.

The Pear Lake Ranger Station would continue to be operated as a winter ski hut.







**For more information and to submit comments:**

**<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/sekiwild>**

Superintendent

ATTN: WSP/DEIS

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

47050 Generals Highway, Three Rivers, CA 93271

Fax: (559) 565-4202

**Submit written comments by August 25, 2014**





# Questions







# Frontcountry Facilities

**Considering improvements to other frontcountry facilities, to accommodate access at Atwell Mill, Middle Fork Kaweah trailhead, North Fork Kaweah trailhead and the South Fork Kaweah trailhead.**

