

Grand Canyon National Park Backcountry Management Plan

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Elements of Alternatives Common to All Action Alternatives (B, C, and D)

Alternative A		Common to All Action Alternatives (B, C, and D)
Management Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corridor Zone Threshold Zone Primitive Zone Wild Zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as A and add Road Natural Zone River Zone
Recreational Use		
Arizona Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No flexible permitting available to Arizona Trail through-hikers South Rim camping at Mather Campground or outside park boundary on USFS land No bicycle use on Arizona Trail's North Rim segment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible permit system allows through-hikers to obtain Corridor Zone backcountry permits NPS considers designating walk-in Arizona Trail camping possibly near South Kaibab Trailhead Bicycles allowed on Arizona Trail's North Rim segment
Bicycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-commercial bicycling allowed in backcountry on park roads open to private vehicles No bicycle use allowed on Arizona Trail's North Rim segment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arizona Trail's North Rim segment open to bicycle use
River-assisted Backcountry Travel (RABT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day use not allowed RABT not identified on overnight backcountry permits PFDs (Type III or V) required to be worn while on the river 5-mile limit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited day use by permit Activity identified on overnight backcountry permits PFDs (Type III or V) required to be worn while on the river RABT watercraft carried in and out by user during the permitted itinerary Maximum RABT group size six persons Identifies river sections closed to RABT Allowable mileage varies by individual action Alternative B, C, D
Tribal Lands and Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPS works with traditionally associated tribes to educate visitors about access to the park's backcountry through tribal lands, and consults with tribes regarding protection and treatment of archaeological and ethnographic resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as A and NPS works with backcountry users to insure awareness regarding backcountry access across tribal lands requires permits from appropriate tribal offices NPS works with Havasupai Tribe re: access across Great Thumb on pilot program to permit ten small groups (1-6 people) across Great Thumb to the park's backcountry March-May. Permit conditions include: tribal escort, two vehicle maximum, four-wheel drive/high-clearance, assigned parking Hematite Mine (adjacent to the Colorado River) closed to visitation NPS works with Traditionally Associated Tribes to determine appropriate protection including access and use of culturally significant sites
Administrative Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backcountry administrative users (resource management, maintenance, interpretation) generally obtain overnight backcountry permits. NPS and outside researchers must also obtain research permits. Wilderness activities evaluated through minimum requirement analysis (MRA) 	
Guided Services Non-commercial		
NPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPS backcountry interpretive day hikes to Cedar Ridge and North Rim locations; Environmental Educational Program overnight trips (1-3 times/year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as A or may increase (subject to further analysis)
Cooperating Association Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPS Cooperating Association: Grand Canyon Field Institute (GCFI) programs reviewed annually by NPS managers to assure course material appropriate and in keeping with NPS mission and trips require backcountry permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue annual review and GCFI subject to Requirements For Permitted Backcountry Operators outlined in Appendix F and require backcountry permits
Guided Services Commercial		
Overnight Backpacking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed in all existing backcountry zones Authorized by commercial use authorization (CUA) No caps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not allowed in Wild Zone Majority managed by contract and limited opportunity for CUA Proposed caps on groups/night/Zone vary by action Alternative B, C, D Other elements of Commercial Overnight Backpacking Services vary by individual Alternative B, C, D Subject to Requirements For Permitted Backcountry Operators outlined in Appendix F
Day Hiking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlimited number of CUAs issued Day hiking locations and distances limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not permitted in Wild Zone Other elements of Commercial Day Hiking Services vary by individual Alternative B, C, D
Bicycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed to Tuweep and Point Sublime Maximum group size of 14 includes guides. All groups maintain ratio of no less than 1 guide for 1 to 6 clients, and 2 guides for 7 to 12 clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as A and Arizona Trail North Rim segment open to commercial bicycle tours
Backcountry Vehicle Tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group size limited to 15 people and one vehicle 22-foot-vehicle length maximum Commercial Vehicle Tours only at Tuweep Up to two trips per day per operator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as A and Trip number per day vary by individual action Alternative B, C, D
Commercial Filming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park policy does not specifically address commercial filming in backcountry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filming purpose must meet necessary and appropriate Wilderness test No commercial activity in Wild Zone Wilderness commercial filming requests evaluated under MRA

Summary of Elements Common to Action Alternatives (B, C, and D) Subject to Adaptive Management

	Alternative A Current Conditions (No Adaptive Management)	Implement on BCMP Adoption	Implement as Needed Through Adaptive Management
Climbing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No current park anchor policy Climbing not identified on permits No power drills in Wilderness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision framework for new anchor placement Overnight backcountry permit identifies activity Monitor use and resource impacts through backcountry permitting process and field surveys Decision framework for new anchor placement No power drills in Wilderness Minimum impact climbing education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day use permit required and identifies climbing route Use limits for specific locations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> restrict number of groups by day or season (overnight and day use) change maximum overnight group size (decrease or increase) seasonal or permanent restrictions for natural and/or cultural resource protection Climbing Management Plan developed
Canyoneering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No current park anchor policy Canyoneering not identified on permits Limited educational information No power drills in Wilderness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision framework for new anchor placement Overnight backcountry permit identifies activity Monitor through backcountry permitting process and field surveys No power drills in Wilderness Maximum group size 6 Minimum impact canyoneering education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day use permit required and identifies canyoneering route Use limits for specific locations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> restrict number of groups by day or season (overnight and day use) change maximum overnight group size (decrease or increase) seasonal or permanent restrictions for natural and/or cultural resource protection Canyoneering Management Plan developed
Extended Day Hiking and Running	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No current park policy No day use permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day use permits required seasonally for area in Table 2.5 and Map 2.6 Minimum cost \$5/person/day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit group size (e.g., 30) Daily use limits (e.g., 250) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> designated days for groups or individuals policy for other trails Day use permits required year-round
Tuweep Day Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Management Plan (GMP) set goal to <i>provide uncrowded and primitive experience</i>, and day use capacity at 85 people or 30 vehicles at one time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Tuweep day use visitor information. May include road signs and existing local and regional visitor centers No more than one commercial stock trip/day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuweep day use permit or reservation system Limits for vehicle number per party Designated days for group events
Use Area Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hermit (BM7): illegal camping outside designated camp area Granite Rapids (BL8): impact levels exceeded Deer Creek/Tapeats Creek Complex: use limits commonly exceeded due to off-itinerary hiking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hermit (BM7): designate new campsite along Hermit Trail Granite Rapids (BL8): group limit decreased from 3 to 2 Deer Creek/Tapeats Creek Complex: redefine Use Areas (Table 2.8a/Map 2.7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease or increase Use Area limits and/or designate sites Variable seasonal use limits (e.g., higher in winter, lower in spring) Change camping designations: at-large to designated sites or designated to at-large Redefine Use Area boundaries (e.g., split large Use Areas, identify complexes like Deer/Tapeats Creeks, Hermit/Monument) Seasonal or permanent closures at specific locations
Human Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities located at designated campsites Bury excrement, carry out toilet paper in areas without facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human waste carry-out required at River Zone backcountry sites by all users (RABT, hikers, etc.) Commercially guided backpacking trips required to carry out human waste in Use Areas without toilets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace existing toilets Remove toilets Install toilets at other sites Specific zones or Use Areas require year-round or seasonal human waste carry-out All Use Areas require seasonal or year-round human waste carry-out