



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sequoia and Kings Canyon
National Parks

47050 Generals Hwy.
Three Rivers, CA 93271

559 565-3341 phone
559 565-3730 fax

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks News Release

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Sintia Kawasaki-Yee, Public Affairs Officer

Phone Number: (559) 679-2866

E-mail: sintia_kawasaki-yee@nps.gov

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram: @SequoiaKingsNPS

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks Seek Public Comment: Wilderness CUA Program

SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS, Calif. September 19, 2018 – On September 26, 2018 the National Park Service (NPS) will open a 30 day public comment period and hold the first of two public meetings to discuss proposed program changes for the 2020-2021 implementation cycle of the parks' Wilderness Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) program. A second public meeting is scheduled for October 2, 2018.

Wilderness CUAs authorize a variety of guided services including day hiking, fishing instruction, backpacking, and pack and saddle (stock) services within Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. An allotted number of CUAs will be authorized for a two-year period, January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2021.

The Parks will hold two public informational meetings to discuss the proposed updates which include modifying the timing of the CUA open season and updating educational trip guidance and wilderness variances. Proposed changes also cover first-aid and medical minimum requirements, and Commercial Service Day (CSD) allocations.

Scheduled public meetings are as follows:

September 26, 2018

1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

Ash Mountain Recreation Hall

46725 Sycamore Drive

Three Rivers, CA 93271

October 2, 2018

2 p.m. - 5 p.m.

351 Pacu Lane, Suite 200

Bishop, CA 93514

The meeting format will be open house, with an opportunity to provide comments directly to the project team members. A copy of the meeting presentation will be posted on the NPS Planning, Environment & Public Comment (PEPC) website following the public meetings.

Questions or comments regarding the public meetings can be directed to the Commercial Services Office at seki_concessions@nps.gov or (559) 565-3103.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Interested parties are encouraged to attend the public meetings and provide official comment on the PEPC website https://parkplanning.nps.gov/SEKI_WildernessCUAS or via written statement.

To submit written comments, you may send them via mail or hand-deliver them to:

Commercial Services
Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks
47050 Generals Highway
Three Rivers, CA 93271

Faxed comments will be accepted at (559) 565-4253.

All written comments about this program must be transmitted, postmarked, or hand-delivered by **October 26, 2018**.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment including your personal identifying information may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Background Information

Commercial Service Day (CSD) allocations for commercial operations in wilderness were implemented in 2018 with the approval of the Wilderness Stewardship Plan / Final Environmental Impact Statement (WSP/FEIS). The WSP/FEIS and Appendix B: Extent Necessary Determination (END) established the extent to which commercial services are necessary and allowable in the parks' wilderness areas. Additionally, the END set limits on CSDs for stock and non-stock commercial activities operating throughout the parks' wilderness.

In 2018, the park selected Alternative 2: Limited CUAs, Hybrid CSD Allocation for the initial 2018-2019 CSD allocation system. Alternative 2 allows a total of 30 wilderness CUAs: 18 non-stock CUAs and 12 stock CUAs. The park is now requesting public input on the 2020-2021 CSD allocation model which is slightly modified from the 2018-2019 model. If you are interested in reading the 2018 Commercial Use Authorization Program Changes and Commercial Service Day Allocation Alternatives, view the document at https://parkplanning.nps.gov/SEKI_WildernessCUAS

If you are interested in reading the WSP/FEIS, please view it on the park website <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/sekiwild>

-NPS-

About Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

These two parks, which lie-side-by-side in the southern Sierra Nevada in Central California, serve as a prime example of nature's size, beauty, and diversity. Over 2 million visitors from across the U.S. and the world visit these parks for the world's largest trees (by volume), grand mountains, rugged foothills, deep canyons, vast caverns, the highest point in the lower 48 states, and more. Learn more at <http://www.nps.gov/seki> or 559-565-3341.

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