

1 **AIR TOUR**  
2 **MANAGEMENT PLAN**  
3 **OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK**

4 **SUMMARY**

5 This Air Tour Management Plan (ATMP) provides the terms and conditions for  
6 commercial air tours conducted over Olympic National Park (Park) pursuant to the  
7 National Parks Air Tour Management Act (Act) of 2000.

8 **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

9 The Act requires that commercial air tour operators conducting or intending to conduct  
10 commercial air tours over a unit of the National Park System apply to the Federal  
11 Aviation Administration (FAA) for authority before engaging in that activity. The Act  
12 further requires that the FAA in cooperation with the National Park Service (NPS)  
13 establish an ATMP for each National Park System unit for which one or more  
14 applications has been submitted, unless that unit is exempt from this requirement.<sup>1</sup>

15 The objective of this ATMP is to develop acceptable and effective measures to mitigate  
16 or prevent the significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tours on natural and  
17 cultural resources, visitor experiences and tribal lands.

18 **2.0 APPLICABILITY**

19 This ATMP applies to all commercial air tours over the Park and commercial air tours  
20 within ½ mile outside the boundary of the Park, as depicted in Figure 1 below. A  
21 commercial air tour subject to this ATMP is any flight, conducted for compensation or  
22 hire in a powered aircraft where a purpose of the flight is sightseeing over the Park,  
23 during which the aircraft flies:

24 (1) Below 5,000 feet above ground level (except solely for the purposes of takeoff  
25 or landing, or necessary for safe operation of an aircraft as determined under the  
26 rules and regulations of the FAA requiring the pilot-in-command to take action to  
27 ensure the safe operation of the aircraft); or

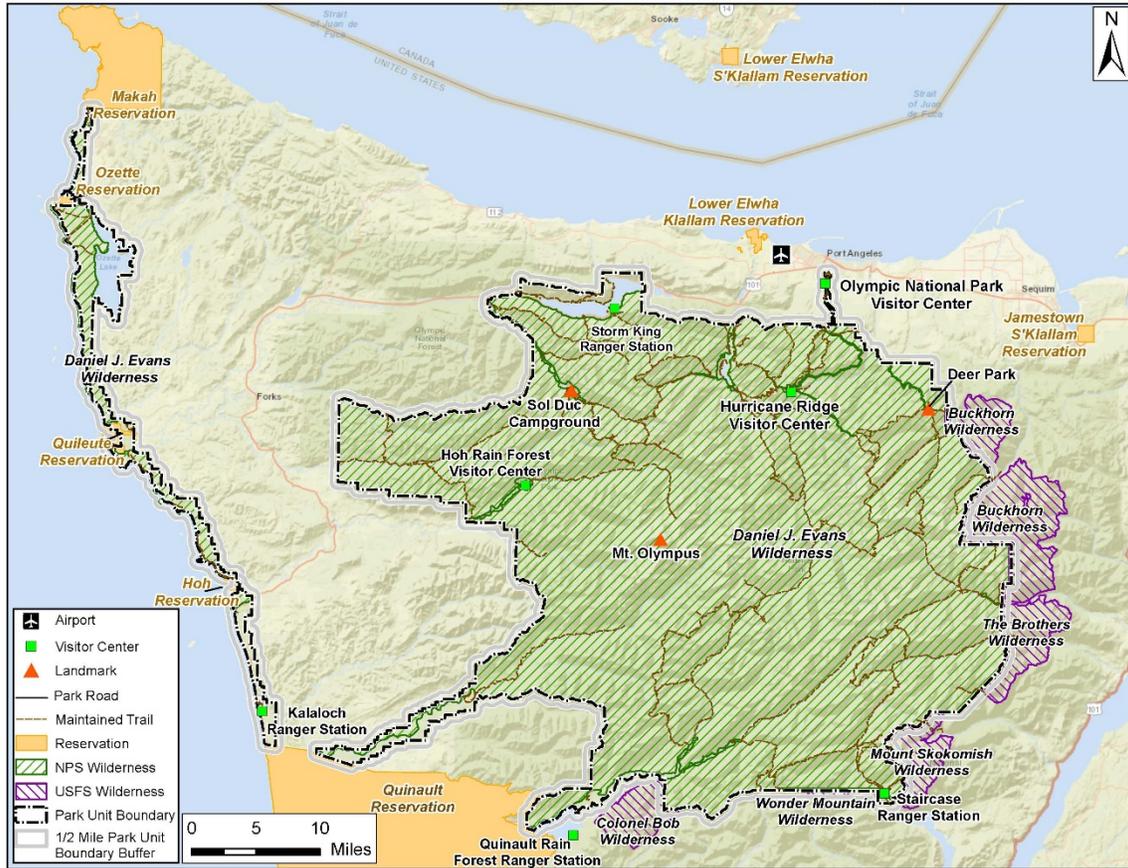
28 (2) Less than one mile laterally from any geographic feature within the Park  
29 (unless more than ½-mile outside the Park boundary).

30 *See* 14 CFR § 136.33(d).

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<sup>1</sup> The Act provides an exemption to the ATMP requirement for parks with 50 or fewer commercial air tour operations each year unless the exemption is withdrawn by the Director of NPS. *See* 49 U.S.C. § 40128(a)(5). As an alternative to an ATMP, the agencies also have the option to prepare a voluntary agreement for the Park.

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**Figure 1.** Map of area subject to this ATMP for Olympic National Park

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### 2.1 Park Overview

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Located on the Olympic Peninsula in northwest Washington State, the Park is a unique wilderness of rugged mountains, coniferous rainforests, wildlife, glaciers, lakes, streams and seascapes. Of the Park's total 922,650 acres, approximately 95% is designated wilderness. The Park's wilderness character is of inestimable value and among the most precious of the region's resources. The wilderness contains over 600 miles of trails, and hundreds of thousands of remote acres offering solitude and unconfined recreation.

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Several tribes attach religious or cultural significance to areas within the Park. The Park also contains other cultural resources, many of which are included on or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, including archeological sites, ethnographic sites, cultural landscapes, and historic districts. The Park has several national and international designations, including designation as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) International Biosphere Reserve (1976), inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List (1981), and designation of Point of Arches as a National Natural Landmark (1971).

49 The Park serves as habitat for numerous federally-listed threatened and endangered  
50 species including marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) and northern spotted  
51 owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*), both federally listed as threatened under the Endangered  
52 Species Act. Northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets are likely to be disrupted by  
53 loud noises that occur in close proximity to an active nest or when the activity occurs  
54 within the line-of-sight of the nesting birds. Sound generating activities located within  
55 close proximity of occupied nest sites or unsurveyed suitable habitat during early  
56 breeding or nesting season have the potential to adversely affect marbled murrelets or  
57 northern spotted owls. Marbled murrelet nesting season occurs from April 1 to  
58 September 23. Marbled murrelet habitat is primarily along or near river corridors where  
59 birds fly from coastal waters to their inland nests to feed nestlings during the dawn and  
60 dusk periods (2-hour window for each period). Northern spotted owl nesting season  
61 occurs from March 1 to September 30. Northern spotted owl habitat is primarily within  
62 the forested areas and parkwide, however, populations have been in steady decline due to  
63 habitat fragmentation and competition with barred owls.

64 The purposes of the Park include: to preserve for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of the  
65 people, a large wilderness park containing the finest sample of primeval forest of Sitka  
66 spruce, western hemlock, Douglas fir, and western red cedar in the entire United States;  
67 to provide suitable winter range and permanent protection for the herds of native  
68 Roosevelt elk and other wildlife indigenous to the area; and, to conserve and render  
69 available to the people, for recreational use, this outstanding mountainous country,  
70 containing numerous glaciers and perpetual snow fields, and a portion of the surrounding  
71 verdant forests together with a narrow strip along the beautiful Washington coast.

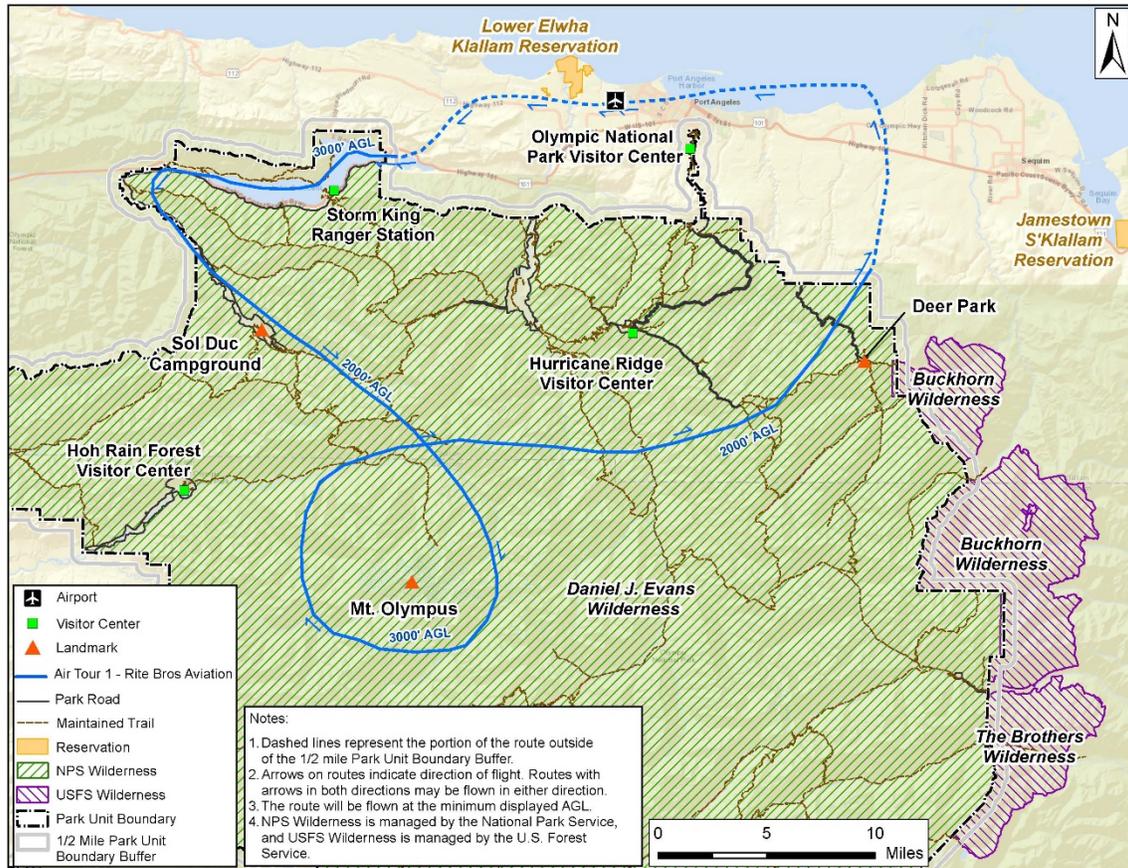
## 72 **3.0 CONDITIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMERCIAL AIR TOUR** 73 **OPERATIONS AT THE PARK**

### 74 3.1 Annual Commercial Air Tours Authorized

75 Under this ATMP, 64 annual commercial air tours are authorized. Appendix A identifies  
76 the operator authorized to conduct commercial air tours and annual flight allocations.

### 77 3.2 Commercial Air Tour Routes and Altitudes

78 Commercial air tours authorized under this ATMP shall be conducted on the route in  
79 Figure 2 below (Appendix B contains an enlarged Figure 2). Altitude expressed in units  
80 above ground level (AGL) is a measurement of the distance between the ground surface  
81 and the aircraft. At the Park, air tours will fly no lower than 2,000 to 3,000 feet (ft.)  
82 AGL, depending on location over the Park, as depicted in Figure 2. Except in an  
83 emergency or to avoid unsafe conditions, or unless otherwise authorized for a specified  
84 purpose, the operator may not deviate from these routes and altitudes.



85  
86 **Figure 2.** Commercial air tour routes at Olympic National Park

87 **3.3 Aircraft Type**

88 The aircraft types authorized to be used for commercial air tours are identified in  
 89 Appendix A. Any new or replacement aircraft must not exceed the noise level produced  
 90 by the aircraft being replaced. In addition to any other applicable notification  
 91 requirements, the operator will notify the FAA and the NPS in writing of any prospective  
 92 new or replacement aircraft and obtain concurrence before initiating air tours with the  
 93 new or replacement aircraft.

94 **3.4 Day/Time**

95 Except as provided in the section below entitled “Quiet Technology Incentives,”  
 96 commercial air tours may operate two hours after sunrise until two hours before sunset,  
 97 as defined by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).<sup>2</sup> Air tours  
 98 may operate any day of the year, except under circumstances provided in the following  
 99 section entitled “Restrictions for Particular Events.”

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<sup>2</sup> Sunrise and sunset data is available from the NOAA Solar Calculator,  
<https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/gmd/grad/solcalc/>

100 3.5 Restrictions for Particular Events

101 The NPS can establish temporary no-fly periods that apply to air tours for special events  
102 or planned Park management. Absent exigent circumstances or emergency operations,  
103 the NPS will provide a minimum of 15 days written notice to the operator for any  
104 restrictions that temporarily restrict certain areas or certain times of day, or 60 days  
105 written notice to the operator in writing in advance of the no-fly period. Events may  
106 include tribal ceremonies or other similar events.

107 3.6 Required Reporting

108 The operator will submit to the FAA and the NPS semi-annual reports regarding the  
109 number of commercial air tours over the Park that are conducted by the operator. These  
110 reports will also include the flight monitoring data required under Section 5.1 of this  
111 ATMP and such other information as the FAA and the NPS may request. Reports are  
112 due to both the FAA and the NPS no later than 30 days after the close of each reporting  
113 period. Reporting periods are January 1 through June 30 and July 1 through December  
114 31. The operator shall adhere to the requirements of any reporting template provided by  
115 the agencies.

116 3.7 Additional Requirements

117 3.7A Operator Training and Education: When made available by Park staff, the  
118 operator/pilot will take at least one training course per year conducted by NPS  
119 staff. The training will include the Park information that the operator can use to  
120 further their own understanding of Park priorities and management objectives as  
121 well as enhance the interpretive narrative for air tour clients and increase  
122 understanding of parks by air tour clients.

123 3.7B Annual Meeting: At the request of either of the agencies, the Park staff, the  
124 local FAA Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), and the operator will meet  
125 once per year to discuss the implementation of this ATMP and any amendments  
126 or other changes to the ATMP. This annual meeting could be conducted in  
127 conjunction with any required annual training.

128 3.7C In-Flight Communication: For situational awareness when conducting tours  
129 of the Park, the operator will utilize frequency 122.8 and report when they enter  
130 and depart a route. The pilot should identify their company, aircraft, and route to  
131 make any other aircraft in the vicinity aware of their position

132 3.8 Quiet Technology Incentives

133 This ATMP incentivizes the adoption of quiet technology aircraft by the commercial air  
134 tour operator conducting commercial air tours over the Park. On all days that flights are  
135 authorized, if the operator has converted to quiet technology aircraft, the operator will be  
136 allowed to conduct tours beginning one hour after sunrise until one hour before sunset. If  
137 implementation of this incentive results in a change in existing conditions or a change in

138 the effects of air tour noise on Park resources or visitor enjoyment, additional analysis  
139 may be required in order to ensure the continued effectiveness of the incentive.

#### 140 **4.0 JUSTIFICATION FOR MEASURES TAKEN**

141 The provisions and conditions in this ATMP are designed to protect Park resources and  
142 visitor experience from the effects of commercial air tours, and support NPS management  
143 objectives for the Park.

144 Under the Act, the FAA granted Interim Operating Authority (IOA) for air tours over the  
145 Park. IOA does not provide any operating conditions (e.g., routes, altitudes, time of day,  
146 etc.) for air tours other than an annual limit.

147 The total number of air tours authorized under this ATMP is consistent with the existing  
148 air tours reported over the Park. The annual flight limits in this ATMP are intended to  
149 protect soundscapes, visitor experience, wilderness character, and wildlife throughout the  
150 Park by limiting the number of potential disturbances caused by commercial air tours.

151 The condition that commercial air tours may fly no lower than 2,000 to 3,000 ft. AGL  
152 depending on location over the Park is consistent with avoidance recommendations for  
153 marbled murrelets and northern spotted owls.<sup>3</sup> Noise from a fixed wing aircraft at 2,000  
154 ft. AGL (Cessna 206B, 57.4decibels (dB) L<sub>max</sub>) is below the sound-only injury threshold  
155 of 92 dB for northern spotted owls.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, this provision will improve  
156 preservation of wilderness character and visitor experiences on the ground by reducing  
157 the intensity of air tour noise to visitors on the ground.

158 Sunrise and sunset are important times of the day for wildlife and visitor use and  
159 experience. Biologically important behaviors for many species occur during this time,  
160 such as the dawn chorus for songbirds, foraging, and communication. Wildlife viewing  
161 is often conducted during this time of day as well. Day/time restrictions have been  
162 included in this ATMP to create quiet periods of the day during which noise from  
163 commercial air tours would not impede these critical wildlife behaviors. These  
164 restrictions also allow for opportunities for visitors to enjoy natural sounds and aligns  
165 with objectives for areas throughout the Park that are managed as wilderness.  
166 Restrictions for particular events are intended to prevent noise interruptions of Park  
167 events or tribal practices.

168 Operator training and education facilitates effective implementation of the ATMP by  
169 making sure that operators remain informed regarding the requirements of this ATMP  
170 including any adaptive management measures or amendments, advances operator  
171 understanding of Park management objectives and priorities, including noise sensitive  
172 areas, and provides opportunities to enhance the interpretive narrative for air tour clients  
173 and increases understanding of parks by air tour clients. The annual meeting will be used  
174 to review and discuss implementation of this ATMP between Park staff, local FAA

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<sup>3</sup> Biological Opinion for Olympic National Park.

<sup>4</sup> Page 6, United States Fish and Wildlife Service: 13410-2007-F-0644

175 FSDO, and the operator and will serve to ensure that the air tour operator is aware of the  
176 terms and conditions of this ATMP and is made aware of new or reoccurring concerns  
177 regarding Park resources.

178 **5.0 COMPLIANCE**

179 On the effective date of this ATMP, all commercial air tours over the Park must comply  
180 with the terms of this ATMP in all respects, except that the operator may continue to  
181 conduct the number of air tour operations authorized under IOA as reflected in their  
182 existing Operations Specifications (OpSpecs) until such OpSpecs are modified to require  
183 compliance with this ATMP. The NPS and the FAA are both responsible for the  
184 monitoring and oversight of the ATMP. If the NPS identifies instances of non-  
185 compliance, the NPS will report such findings to the FAA's FSDO having geographic  
186 oversight for the Park. The FSDO will investigate all reports of noncompliance. The  
187 public may also report allegations of non-compliance with this ATMP to the FSDO  
188 which may result in an investigation by the FAA.

189 Investigative determination of non-compliance may result in partial or total loss of  
190 authorization to conduct commercial air tours authorized by this ATMP. Any violation  
191 of OpSpecs shall be treated in accordance with FAA Order 2150.3, *FAA Compliance and*  
192 *Enforcement Program*.

193 5.1 Aircraft Monitoring Technology

194 Operators are required to equip all aircraft used for air tours with flight monitoring  
195 technology, use flight monitoring technology during all air tours under this ATMP, and to  
196 report flight monitoring data as an attachment to the operator's semi-annual reports. The  
197 required flight monitoring data shall be provided in a file format approved by the  
198 agencies, such as a .csv or .xlsx format. Data must include the following information for  
199 each row of data (i.e., each ping):

- 200 • Unique flight identifier
- 201 • Latitude
- 202 • Longitude
- 203 • Geometric altitude
- 204 • Tail number
- 205 • Date
- 206 • Time stamp
- 207 • Operator and Doing Business As (DBA), if different
- 208 • Aircraft type
- 209 • Aircraft model

210 The ping rate should be set to a maximum of 15 seconds. Operators already using  
211 aircraft equipped with flight monitoring technology shall ensure it meets the performance  
212 standards listed above or acquire and install acceptable flight monitoring technology  
213 within 180 days of the effective date of this ATMP. For aircraft not already equipped

214 with flight monitoring technology, within 180 days of the effective date of this ATMP,  
215 operators shall equip those aircraft with suitable flight monitoring technology.

216 **6.0 NEW ENTRANTS**

217 New entrants must apply for and be granted operating authority before conducting  
218 commercial air tours over the lands and waters covered by this ATMP. For the purposes  
219 of this ATMP, a “new entrant” is a commercial air tour operator that has not been granted  
220 any operations under this ATMP or that no longer holds operations under this ATMP at  
221 the time of the application.

222 The FAA and the NPS will publish additional information for interested parties about the  
223 form and required content of a new entrant application. The FAA and the NPS will  
224 jointly review new entrant applications. Review of applications submitted prior to the  
225 effective date of this ATMP will commence within six months of the effective date.  
226 Applications submitted after that time will be considered no less frequently than every  
227 three years from the effective date of this ATMP.

228 The FAA will issue OpSpecs to any new entrant granted operating authority under this  
229 ATMP (and, if necessary, will revise OpSpecs to operators whose allocation of operating  
230 authority change due to accommodation of a new entrant) within 90 days of the  
231 publication of an amended ATMP or of the effective date of ATMP changes  
232 implemented through the adaptive management process.

233 **7.0 COMPETITIVE BIDDING**

234 When appropriate, the FAA and the NPS will conduct a competitive bidding process  
235 pursuant to the criteria set forth in 49 U.S.C. § 40128(a)(2)(B) and other criteria  
236 developed by the agencies. Competitive bidding may also be appropriate to address: a  
237 new entrant application; a request by an existing operator for additional operating  
238 authority; consideration by the agencies of Park-specific resources, impacts, or safety  
239 concerns; or for other reasons.

240 The agencies will request information necessary for them to undertake the competitive  
241 bidding process from existing operators. Failure to provide such information in a timely  
242 manner may result in the disqualification of any such operator.

243 Competitive bidding may necessitate an amendment to this ATMP, additional  
244 environmental review, and/or the issuance of new or revised OpSpecs. If updated  
245 OpSpecs are required, they will be issued within 90 days of the effective date of this  
246 ATMP.

247 **8.0 ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**

248 Adaptive management allows for minor modifications to this ATMP without a formal  
249 ATMP amendment if the impacts of such changes are within the impacts already

250 analyzed by the agencies under the National Environmental Policy Act, the National  
251 Historic Preservation Act, and the Endangered Species Act. Adjustments to the number  
252 of commercial air tours allocated to individual operators as a result of the competitive  
253 bidding process and minor changes to routes, altitudes, or other operating parameters are  
254 examples of adaptive management measures that may not require a formal ATMP  
255 Amendment. Such modifications may be made if: 1) the NPS determines that they are  
256 necessary to avoid adverse impacts to Park resources, values, or visitor experiences; 2)  
257 the FAA determines the need for such changes due to safety concerns; or 3) the agencies  
258 determine that appropriate, minor changes to this ATMP are necessary to address new  
259 information or changed circumstances.

260 **9.0 AMENDMENT**

261 This ATMP may be amended at any time: if the NPS, by notification to the FAA and the  
262 operator(s), determines that the ATMP is not adequately protecting Park resources and/or  
263 visitor enjoyment; if the FAA, by notification to the NPS and the operator(s), determines  
264 that the ATMP is adversely affecting aviation safety and/or the national aviation system;  
265 or, if the agencies determine that appropriate changes to this ATMP are necessary to  
266 address new information or changed circumstances that cannot be addressed through  
267 adaptive management.

268 The FAA and the NPS will jointly consider requests to amend this ATMP from interested  
269 parties. Requests must be made in writing and submitted to both the FAA and the NPS.  
270 Requests must also include justification that includes information regarding how the  
271 requested amendment: is consistent with the objectives of this ATMP with respect to  
272 protecting Park resources, tribal lands, or visitor use and enjoyment; and would not  
273 adversely affect aviation safety or the national aviation system. The FAA will publish  
274 additional information for interested parties about the form and manner for submitting a  
275 request.

276 Increases to the total number of annual air tours authorized under this ATMP resulting  
277 from accommodation of a new entrant application or a request by an existing operator  
278 will require an amendment to this ATMP.

279 Notice of all Amendments to this ATMP will be published in the Federal Register for  
280 notice and comment.

281 **10.0 CONFORMANCE OF OPERATIONS SPECIFICATIONS**

282 New OpSpecs that incorporate the operating parameters set forth in this ATMP will be  
283 issued within 90 days of the effective date of this ATMP.

284 **11.0 EFFECTIVE DATE**

285 This ATMP is effective [date].

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<INSERT name>, Superintendent  
Olympic National Park  
National Park Service

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<INSERT name>, <INSERT title>  
<INSERT name of FAA office>  
Federal Aviation Administration

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<INSERT name>, Director  
Unified Interior Region 9:  
Columbia-Pacific Northwest  
National Park Service

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<INSERT name>, Associate  
Director  
Natural Resource Stewardship and  
Science Directorate  
National Park Service

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**APPENDIX A**

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**1.0 COMMERCIAL AIR TOUR ALLOCATIONS**

292

Table 1 provides allocations of the annual operations along with authorized aircraft type by operator.

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**Table 1.** Air Tour Operations and Aircraft Type by Operator

Air Tour Operator	Annual Operations	Daily Operations	Aircraft Type
Rite Bros Aviation, Inc.	64	No set limit	CE-172-K, CE-172-N, CE-206-TU206F, CE-206-U206A

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**2.0 DAY/TIME RESTRICTIONS**

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Table 2 lists the time-of-day and day-of-week operating parameters.

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**Table 2.** Air Tour Time-of-Day and Day-of-Week Restrictions by Operator

Air Tour Operator	Time-of-Day	Day-of-Week
Rite Bros Aviation, Inc.	Two hours after sunrise until two hours before sunset	The NPS can establish temporary no-fly periods that apply to air tours for special events or planned Park management.

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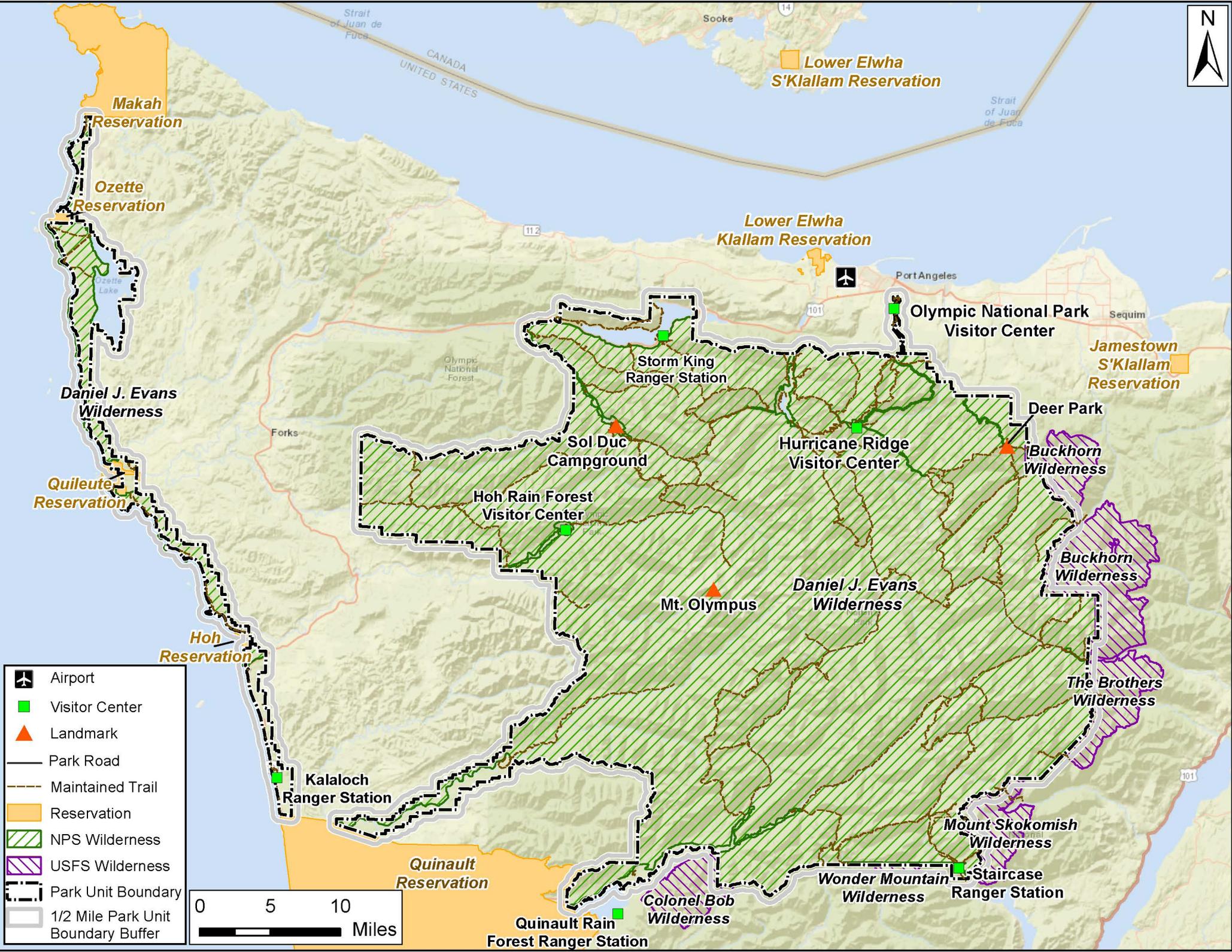
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**APPENDIX B**

305 Enlarged Figure 1 and 2



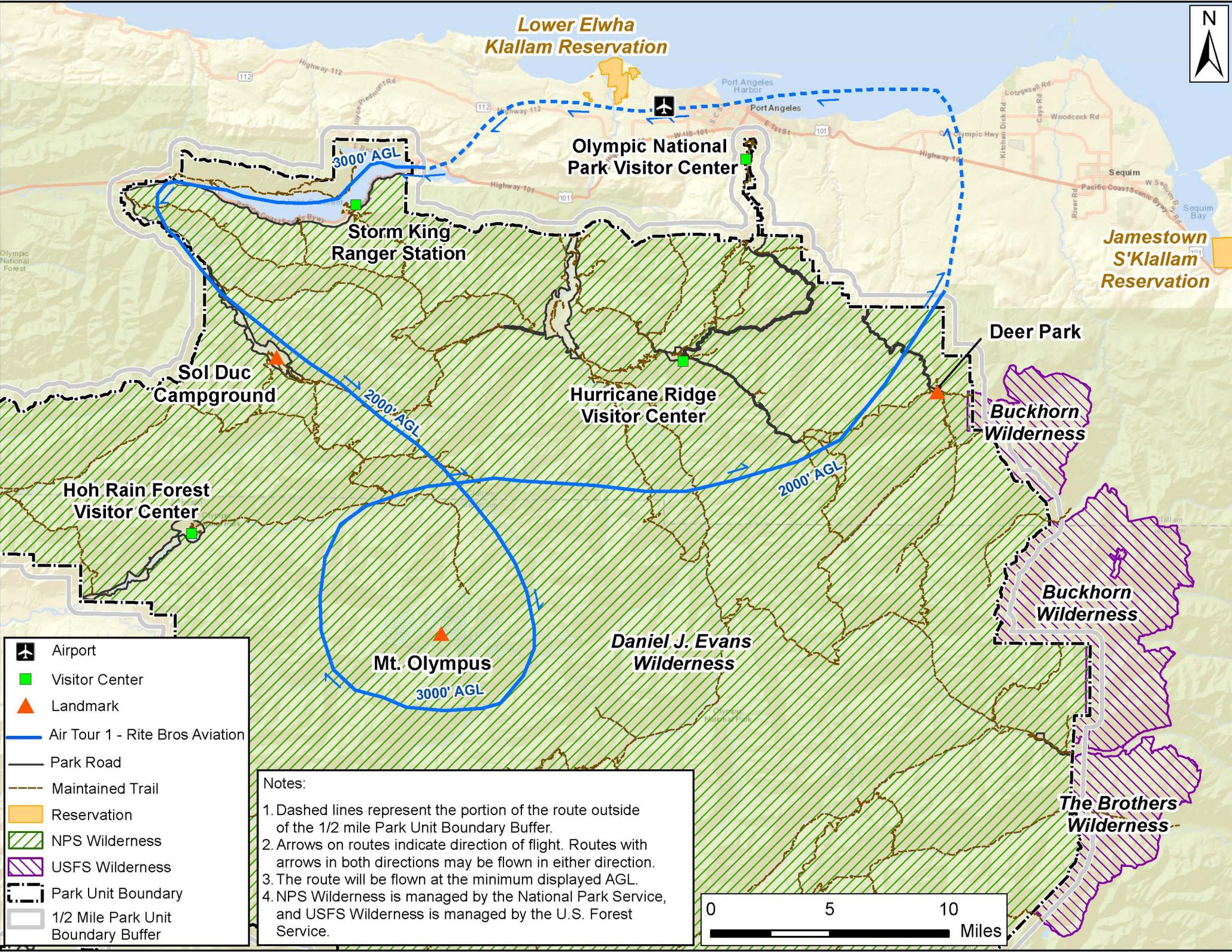
- Airport
- Visitor Center
- Landmark
- Park Road
- Maintained Trail
- Reservation
- NPS Wilderness
- USFS Wilderness
- Park Unit Boundary
- 1/2 Mile Park Unit Boundary Buffer





# Lower Elwha Klallam Reservation

# Jamestown S'Klallam Reservation



Olympic National Park Visitor Center

Storm King Ranger Station

Sol Duc Campground

Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center

Hoh Rain Forest Visitor Center

Deer Park

Buckhorn Wilderness

Buckhorn Wilderness

Daniel J. Evans Wilderness

Mt. Olympus

The Brothers Wilderness

Notes:

1. Dashed lines represent the portion of the route outside of the 1/2 mile Park Unit Boundary Buffer.
2. Arrows on routes indicate direction of flight. Routes with arrows in both directions may be flown in either direction.
3. The route will be flown at the minimum displayed AGL.
4. NPS Wilderness is managed by the National Park Service, and USFS Wilderness is managed by the U.S. Forest Service.



- Airport
- Visitor Center
- Landmark
- Air Tour 1 - Rite Bros Aviation
- Park Road
- Maintained Trail
- Reservation
- NPS Wilderness
- USFS Wilderness
- Park Unit Boundary
- 1/2 Mile Park Unit Boundary Buffer