

GRANITE CHIEF WILDERNESS
MANAGEMENT PLAN
and
WILDERNESS IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Tahoe National Forest
Truckee and Foresthill Ranger Districts
Placer County, California

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GRANITE CHIEF WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PLAN
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

This document constitutes amended Management Area direction for MA 80-Granite Chief Wilderness of the Tahoe National Forest Land & Resource Management Plan.

In order to accomplish this objective, the Forest Service followed the planning system suggested by Stankey, et al., in the The Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) System for Wilderness Planning, Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, USDA - Forest Service, General Technical Report INT-176, January 1985. This is explained in more depth in Section B, under Forest Plan direction.

This management direction evolved through an interdisciplinary team and public involvement process which included comments in over 125 letters. This management direction is based on the premise that the publics affected by wilderness management decisions must be a part of the decision making process for decisions to be successful. Another underlying management premise described in this direction is that public involvement, consent, and support regarding implementation will be an ongoing process.

As additional restrictions are needed or changes in this direction are deemed necessary, additional consultation may be needed. The mailing list in Appendix A shall be a dynamic list to be used to involve members of the public in the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of Granite Chief management and the decisions generated by that ongoing process.

B. GENERAL WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT DIRECTION AND POLICY

The management direction for the Granite Chief Wilderness (GCW) focuses on delivery and preservation of those wilderness-related benefits specified in the Wilderness Act of 1964, the National Forest Management Act of 1976, the California Wilderness Act of 1984, the National Historic Preservation Act, USDA Forest Service policy guidelines, Associate Chief Leonard's letter dated April 12, 1988 regarding exempted competitive events, and the Tahoe National Forest Plan (Land and Resource Management Plan).

1. "...shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such a manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of their wilderness character..."
(Section 2a)

Wilderness Act of 1964
(P.L. 88-577)

"...wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use." (Section 4b)

2. "...In carrying out such purposes, National Forest Wilderness resources shall be managed to promote, perpetuate, and where necessary, restore the wilderness character of the land and its specific values of solitude, physical and mental challenges, scientific study inspiration, and primitive recreation. To that end: (a) Natural ecological succession will be allowed to operate freely to the extent feasible. (b) Wilderness will be made available for human use to the optimum extent consistent with the maintenance of primitive conditions. (c) In resolving conflicts in resource use,

Department of Agriculture
Regulations (36 CFR 293)

wilderness values will be dominant to the extent not limited by the Wilderness Act, subsequent establishing legislation, or the regulations in this part." (36 CFR 293.2)

3. "...Provide for limiting and distributing visitor use of specific portions in accord with periodic estimates of the maximum levels of use that allow natural processes to operate fully and that do not impair the values for which wilderness areas were created..." (219.18(a))

Department of
Agriculture
Regulations
(36 CFR 219)

4. "We have...decided to grant your request for an exception to our policy of prohibiting competitive events within established Wilderness. While we are granting exceptions for these....events, we want to emphasize that our basic policy [of prohibiting competitive events in Wilderness] remains unchanged. Furthermore, that participation in these events will generally not exceed levels established as of September 28, 1984, (when the Granite Chief Wilderness was established)."

Letter by Associate
Chief Leonard, dated
April 12, 1988

5. The manager, then, must face the paradox of wilderness as described by Congress, as seen or felt by those whose values vary, and the uses and activities permitted and prohibited in those areas by the Wilderness Act. They must solve the problem of use of the area while still keeping these parts of the natural world intact. They must:

"...Manage the wilderness resource to ensure its character and values are dominant and enduring. Its management must be consistent over time and between areas to ensure its present and future availability and enjoyment as wilderness. Manage wilderness to ensure that human influence does not impede the free play of natural forces or interfere with natural successions in the eco-systems and to ensure that each wilderness offers outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Manage wilderness as one resource rather than a series of separate resources."

Forest Service
Manual Chapter
2320(4.36)

6. "The historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people..."

Historic
Preservation
Act of 1966

7. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES - 2320.2

- a. Maintain and perpetuate the enduring resource of wilderness as one of the multiple uses of National Forest System land.
- b. Maintain wilderness in such a manner that eco-systems are unaffected by human manipulation and influences so that plants and animals develop and respond to natural forces.
- c. Minimize the impact of those kinds of uses and activities generally prohibited by the Wilderness Act, but specifically excepted by the Act of subsequent legislation.
- d. Protect and perpetuate wilderness character and public values including, but not limited to, opportunities for scientific study, education, solitude, physical and mental challenge and stimulation, inspiration, and primitive recreation experiences
- e. Gather information and carry out research in a manner compatible with preserving the wilderness environment to increase understanding of wilderness ecology, wilderness uses, management opportunities, and visitor behavior."

Forest Service
Manual Chapter
2320.2

8. POLICY - 2320.3

- a. Where there are alternatives among management decisions, wilderness values shall dominate over all other considerations except where limited by the Wilderness Act, subsequent legislation, or regulations.

Forest Service
Manual Chapter
2320.3

- b. Manage the use of other resources in wilderness in a manner compatible with wilderness resource management objectives.
- c. In wildernesses where the establishing legislation permits resource uses and activities that are non-conforming exceptions to the definition of wilderness as described in the Wilderness Act, manage these nonconforming uses and activities in such a manner as to minimize their effect on the wilderness resource.
- d. Cease uses and activities and remove existing structures not essential to the administration, protection, or management of wilderness for wilderness purposes or not provided for in the establishing legislation.
- e. Because wilderness does not exist as a vacuum, consider activities on both sides of wilderness boundaries during planning and articulate management goals and the blending of diverse resources in forest plans....
- f. Manage each wilderness as a total unit and coordinate management direction when they cross other administrative boundaries.
- g. Use interdisciplinary skills in planning for wilderness use and administration.
- h. Gather necessary information and carry out research programs in a manner that is compatible with the preservation of the wilderness environment.

9. FOREST PLAN DIRECTION

The National Forest Management Act required that Forest Plans provide for integrated management direction for each resource on the Forest. General management direction for the Granite Chief Wilderness is contained in MA 80 of the Tahoe National Forest Plan, as amended. A copy of this amended MA direction is included in Appendix A. The Forest Plan is intended to provide general management direction for the wilderness. This Wilderness Management Plan and Wilderness Implementation Schedule are tiered to the Forest Plan and provide specific direction on implementation of general Forest Plan direction.

The Forest Plan directs that the planning framework to be used for managing the Granite Chief will be the Limits of Acceptable Change, or LAC. This process is described by Stankey, et al., in The Limits of Acceptable Change System for Wilderness Planning. The LAC system provides a framework for determining the range of social and resource conditions acceptable in wilderness settings in order to ensure a diversity of high quality

wilderness recreation opportunities is provided. It focuses on limiting change to resources that, if overused, would degrade the wilderness experience, and defines opportunities for various levels of contact with the natural scene. The concept recognizes that an area's ability to accommodate use depends on several variables, including the intensity of management, visitor behavior, timing or season of use, and elevation and habitat of the specific sites involved. The lands within the wilderness were assigned to one of the four Wilderness Opportunity Levels.

C. ISSUES GENERATED DURING THE WILDERNESS PLANNING PROCESS

1. How will each alternative manage recreation use (day use, backpacking, stock use, and dogs) at Five Lakes to minimize conflict among users and to increase solitude?

Overnight camping activity at Five Lakes can conflict with day use when campers dominate lake access for extended periods with tents and other gear.

Stock use often conflicts with the high amount of day hiking activity at Five Lakes.

Some visitors to Five Lakes expressed having a diminished wilderness experience because of the number of dogs and associated problems (barking, feces on the trail and lakeshores, and uncontrolled behavior). However, most visitors have indicated a neutral or positive recreation experience by bringing their own dogs or encountering other people's dogs at Five Lakes.

2. How will each alternative address permit systems?

Traditional permits are obtained in person at a USFS office. Out-of-town visitors unable to obtain a permit during office hours could telephone the USFS office and pick up the permit from an outdoor box after hours.

Traditional permits would reduce the spontaneity of wilderness visits, particularly day visits, and require visitors to drive additional miles to obtain permits. This could indirectly reduce use at Five Lakes, thus providing visitors with more solitude. This kind of permit could also encourage visitors to disperse to lesser-used areas, thereby increasing opportunities for solitude throughout much of the wilderness. Traditional permits have a high educational value and are more effective than self-registration permits in protecting the resources and enforcing regulations. Some visitors would rather experience crowding than be required to obtain a traditional permit, although most of these visitors are not seeking a wilderness-dependent experience.

Self-registration permits, which require signing in at the trailhead, are much more convenient to the visitor but without the one-on-one educational contact, are less effective in protecting the resources.

Compliance checking for either kind of permit would impact some visitors' solitude.

3. How will each alternative manage trails and trailheads to provide for solitude and wilderness access?

Additional trails could disperse use and allow for greater opportunities for solitude on the same land base. Though some visitors' wilderness experience and solitude would be enhanced by various methods of dispersing use, other visitors' wilderness experience would be diminished by highly maintained trails, new trails, and the creation of new campsites and other impacts in once-pristine areas.

The short, highly maintained trail to Five Lakes provides relatively easy access and attracts a large amount of use that is not wilderness-dependent. This heavy use adversely impacts the opportunity for solitude, although many visitors indicate that they do not expect solitude when visiting Five Lakes.

4. How will each alternative manage the Whiskey Creek cabins, which are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places?

The Whiskey Creek cabins are historically and culturally significant, but are permanent improvements which are not usually allowed within a wilderness area. The Wilderness Act of 1964, which states that wilderness is an area "...without permanent improvements...", also states that wilderness may contain "features of... historic value."

The Whiskey Creek cabins may detract from the wilderness experience of those visitors seeking increased challenge and risk in a location without signs of human habitation. The cabins may add to the experience of visitors seeking a primitive recreation experience, but not a wilderness experience; for these people, the cabins offer a sense of discovery, imagination of life in the past, and a sense of safety associated with having a structure nearby.

The existence of the cabins would continue to attract visitors to the Whiskey Creek area.

5. How will each alternative manage campsites, overnight backpacking, and horse camping to protect vegetation and soil stability and productivity?

Overnight backpacking and horse camping have caused soil compaction and a loss of the soil litter and duff layers that help prevent erosion. Soil erosion is slowly contributing to sedimentation of lakes and streams, which in turn can lead to increased nutrient loading, increased aquatic flora, and a reduction in clarity.

Backpacking impacts are most concentrated at Five Lakes and the cabin vicinity at Whiskey Creek, but occur at other lakes and along streams throughout the wilderness. Overnight visitors comprise less than 10% of total visitation, but cause the vast majority of resource impacts.

Recreational stock have impacted the Five Lakes and Little Needle Lake basins. The Five Lakes basin has shallow, rocky soils and a short growing season, which results in widespread and slowly recovering stock impacts. Little Needle Lake has received an increase in stock use over the last 2 years, resulting in highly noticeable and potentially long-lasting impacts to vegetation and soils. Any stock use at Mildred Lakes would necessitate cross-country travel on highly unstable soils and would result in the creation of impromptu trails and potentially severe erosion. These lakes are surrounded by wet meadows that would not withstand stock use.

Visitor use in the Granite Chief is expected to increase between 10-20% over the next decade.

Recreation stock grazing has the potential to change plant communities, with grasses, sedges, and rushes being replaced by herbaceous weedy plants. These changes could occur in areas of traditional overnight stock use: Diamond Crossing, Whiskey Creek, Big Springs, Picayune Valley, Little American Valley, and Shanks Cove. A significant increase in recreational stock use over the next decade could trigger long-term changes in the native plant communities at many of the above locations.

Campfires have sterilized soil for long periods of time. Dispersing use to pristine areas or closing too many campsites without reducing use could result in new fire rings being created, causing soil sterilization to increase.

Some campsites are impacted beyond the standard set for the Granite Chief's four Wilderness Opportunity Levels (WOL's). If closed, revegetation of at least 1/3 of these campsites' barren (unvegetated) area could be expected in 5-20 years with rehabilitation, and 50 or more years if unaided by rehabilitation. Complete return of campsites to pre-use conditions (including soil porosity) could take up to 100 years if unaided by rehabilitation.

Because most of the impacts on campsite vegetation occur within the first 8-10 nights of use, any attempts to disperse use to pristine areas by constructing new trails, using a permit system to disperse use, or any other methods would result in greater impacts to vegetation overall than allowing the same amount of use to concentrate on already-impacted sites at the more popular areas.

6. How will each alternative manage day use activities to protect soils and vegetation?

Day hiking, horseback riding, fishing, and swimming at Five Lakes have contributed to the loss of soil litter and duff layers on the lakeshores and have created trails to the lakeshores, leading to erosion.

Day use of recreational stock has the potential to impact the lake basins in the Granite Chief. New social trails have formed at Little Needle Lake, and the existing social trail is not designed to handle much stock use.

Any stock use at Mildred Lakes would necessitate cross-country travel on highly unstable soils and would result in the creation of impromptu trails and severe erosion. Mildred Lakes are surrounded by wet meadows that would not withstand stock use.

7. How will each alternative manage fire in the wilderness to protect the wilderness resource?

Fire suppression and subsequent natural fuel buildup have increased the risk of a catastrophic fire, which could result in sterilized, hydrophobic soils and severe erosion. Hydrophobic soils repel rather than absorb water, resulting in severe runoff and soil loss.

Fire Suppression has changed the vegetation mosaic and stand structure, which results in a less diverse and, therefore, weakened ecosystem.

Fires and smoke have the potential to impact the recreation experiences.

8. How will each alternative manage recreation, dogs, and fire to provide diverse habitat and protection for wildlife?

Recreational use, which is expected to increase in the future, has the potential to disturb several sensitive species which exist in the Granite Chief Wilderness.

Overnight camping activity in key fawning habitat has the potential to disturb mule deer fawns from May 15 to July 1 each year.

Dogs, particularly if unleashed, have the potential to critically disturb or kill mule deer fawns from May 15 to July 15 each year in key fawning habitat.

By changing the vegetational mosaic, fire suppression can impact various wildlife populations. Conifers have reinvaded brushfields, and timbered areas have not been permitted to burn. The result has been a gradual change in vegetation diversity, particularly in the timbered areas. Species that live in early successional vegetational types are gradually losing habitat. If current management continued, eventually these species would decline in number or a catastrophic fire would occur and revert large acreages to the early successional stages. Species that depend on late-successional vegetation (California spotted owl, goshawk, marten, Sierra Nevada red fox and possibly Pacific fisher) are prospering under the present fire suppression program, though a large fire in the future could alter their habitat significantly.

9. What changes to the current fish stocking regime will each alternative recommend to the California Department of Fish and Game in order to bring Five Lakes to a more natural state?

The brook trout stocked in Five Lakes are not native to the Sierra Nevada and are an unnatural element in the wilderness. The Department of Fish and

Game has concerns that modifications to established stocking practices would set a precedent in other wilderness areas.

10. How will each alternative protect water quality?

Most campsites in the Granite Chief Wilderness are closer than 100' to water, which increases the potential for visitors to adversely impact water quality with fecal matter, soaps, etc.

Fire suppression has increased the risk of catastrophic fire, which could result in severe erosion and sedimentation of lakes, rivers, and streams in the wilderness, depending upon each fire and its location.

D. OPPORTUNITIES

The following opportunity to monitor air quality in the wilderness has been identified:

Develop an air quality monitoring plan which may include such aspects as inventory and monitoring of visibility, water quality, and sensitive plant species (those species sensitive to degradation of air quality, such as lichen), prescribed burning smoke emissions, ozone injury to ponderosa and Jeffrey pines, and fugitive dust emissions from logging and construction operations which occur outside of the wilderness.

In the EA, no analysis was performed and therefore no decision was made regarding air quality monitoring.

E. THE SELECTED ALTERNATIVE FOR MANAGING THE GRANITE CHIEF

The Granite Chief Environmental Assessment analyzed six alternatives for management of the wilderness. Alternative F was chosen, and consists of the following actions:

1. Management Strategy

Manage the wilderness using the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) strategy; monitor wilderness conditions per the Wilderness Management Plan and implement management actions per the Wilderness Implementation Schedule as necessary to maintain those conditions.

2. Wilderness Opportunity Levels

Wilderness Opportunity Levels (WOL's) will change in the following areas as indicated: bring the Five Lakes basin to WOL III for resource conditions; bring the two hunting camps in Shanks Cove to WOL III and WOL IV within this planning period (with the eventual goal of WOL II for both); bring the Five Lakes Creek trail corridor between the Big Springs trail and Diamond Crossing to WOL II, and allow the Granite Chief Peak area to become WOL III due to the managerial presence required to manage the high numbers of day users.

3. Domestic Livestock Grazing

Continue domestic livestock grazing in the Granite Chief, as permitted by Term Grazing Permits existing at the time of the enactment of the Wilderness Act. Manage all activities, including livestock, to minimize conflicts with wilderness and to maintain resources at the established standards.

When conflicts arise between grazing and recreation along trail corridors and in lake basins, resolve the conflict in favor of recreation.

Cattle use in the upper Picayune Valley portion of the Sierra Crest sheep allotment by the Chipmunk allotment (1992) permittee will be discontinued. This will be accomplished no later than the planned Chipmunk AMP revision, currently scheduled for the year 2000, or with change of permittees, whichever is sooner.

4. Recreation

Carry forward from the Forest Plan the group size limit of 12 for wilderness visitors.

Prohibit camping within 600 feet of Five Lakes and within 250 feet of the Whiskey Creek cabins.

Close and rehabilitate approximately 78 campsites throughout the wilderness.

Develop agreements with users of large hunters' camps to reduce resource damage and development to levels compatible with wilderness values.

Inventory range condition in areas frequently used by overnight recreational stock users. Encourage users to carry feed until range capacity can be determined. Encourage picketing and hobbling for short periods of time only (2-3 hours per day).

Encourage the practice of tying recreational packstock at least 100 feet from water and, where possible, from campsites.

Prohibit all recreational stock use within 600 feet of Five Lakes, Little Needle Lake, and Mildred Lakes, except to perform work where stock was determined to be the "minimum tool," such as the clean up of lake basins and removal of manmade and non-native materials. Allow stock to pass through the Five Lakes basin on the Five Lakes trail.

Limit recreational stock group size to 12 head of stock for day use and 8 head of stock for overnight use. Provide a hitchrail at Whiskey Creek to confine stock impacts to one location.

Prohibit dogs during deer fawning from May 15 to July 15 each year in the key fawning areas. These areas are defined as follows: the wilderness portion of the French Meadows Game Refuge (except for passage on the Pacific Crest Trail), the Big Springs trail, and the portion of Five Lakes Creek paralleling that trail.

Construct a new trail, approximately 1/2-mile long, along Five Lakes Creek below the outlet of Five Lakes to access campsites where camping will be permitted.

Provide graded parking at the Greyhorse and Tevis Cup trailhead (after relocation of the Tevis Cup trail) to accommodate 2-3 vehicles. Work towards obtaining the easement for the Greyhorse trailhead.

Reduce overall levels of trail maintenance, emphasizing the protection of resources while minimizing serious threats to public safety. Ease of travel and convenience would generally not be emphasized.

5. Cultural Resources

Explore the opportunity to develop an agreement with an appropriate partner to stabilize and maintain the Whiskey Creek cabins to prolong their historic value, keeping the cabins in a state of "arrested decay." Prolonging historic value is defined as retaining the existing historical character and condition of the structures and halting any process which may be affecting their character. Prolonging could include such actions as repairing the roof and replacing logs with dry rot. This partnership agreement will be pursued during the winter of 1992/93.

If an acceptable partner is not found, allow the cabins to deteriorate naturally while managing for public safety.

Conduct archaeological surveys, with an emphasis on travel corridors. Take action to mitigate unacceptable impacts to historic properties.

6. Outfitter/Guides

No new, commercial special-use permits will be allowed unless they are shown to be beneficial to the wilderness resource and are wilderness dependent. "Beneficial" is defined as teaching clients minimum-impact techniques and imparting wilderness values, including non-recreation values, such as wildlife habitat, ecological diversity, and scientific values.

Do not authorize any backpack-guide service at Little Needle Lake and Mildred Lakes.

Do not authorize any cross-country ski outfitter/guide to camp overnight in the Five Lakes basin.

7. Fire Management

As part of the Fire Management Action Plan, identify situations in which fire will be allowed to play a more natural role, including natural ignitions and management ignitions. The plan will recognize that the opportunity for utilizing natural ignitions would be limited due to the small size of the Granite Chief Wilderness. Additional considerations will include the proximity to the Class 1 airshed of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, the existing Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines designed to protect wildlife, watershed, etc., county constraints on air quality degradation, and the existence of private lands that border the wilderness.

Give consideration to public safety and the long-term recreational experience that visitors may have as a result of fire. Visitors may be subjected to short-term inconveniences such as trails being used as fire lines and popular camping areas being allowed to burn.

8. Fish Stocking

Recommend to the California Department of Fish and Game that the current stocking of trout at Five Lakes be discontinued.

9. Snow Survey Course

Within 10 years, move the snow survey course to a location outside of the wilderness after a new one is established and correlation is made between the two. Until removal, recommend that the snow course be accessed using non-motorized means.

Specific actions connected with the above direction is located in Chapter 4 of this Plan.

CHAPTER 2

WILDERNESS OPPORTUNITY LEVELS (WOL's) AND ALLOCATIONS

A. DEFINITION OF WILDERNESS OPPORTUNITY LEVELS

Wilderness Opportunity Levels represent a spectrum of wilderness experience opportunities within the GCW. These classes describe existing areas within the wilderness where different resource, social, and managerial conditions are found.

Three components are used to describe opportunity classes: resource, social, and managerial settings. Each component has several elements that are used to describe the opportunity level. These descriptions provide managers, researchers, and users with common definitions for terms used to describe areas within the wilderness.

The WOL's were vaguely and qualitatively defined in the Forest Plan. During the wilderness planning process, the ID Team defined the WOL's more quantitatively and in much more detail to aid in setting LAC standards and develop a common level of understanding. Forestwide Standard and Guideline #14 (WOL Descriptions) was amended in Forest Plan Amendment #2 to reflect these changes.

B. ALLOCATION OF WILDERNESS OPPORTUNITY LEVELS

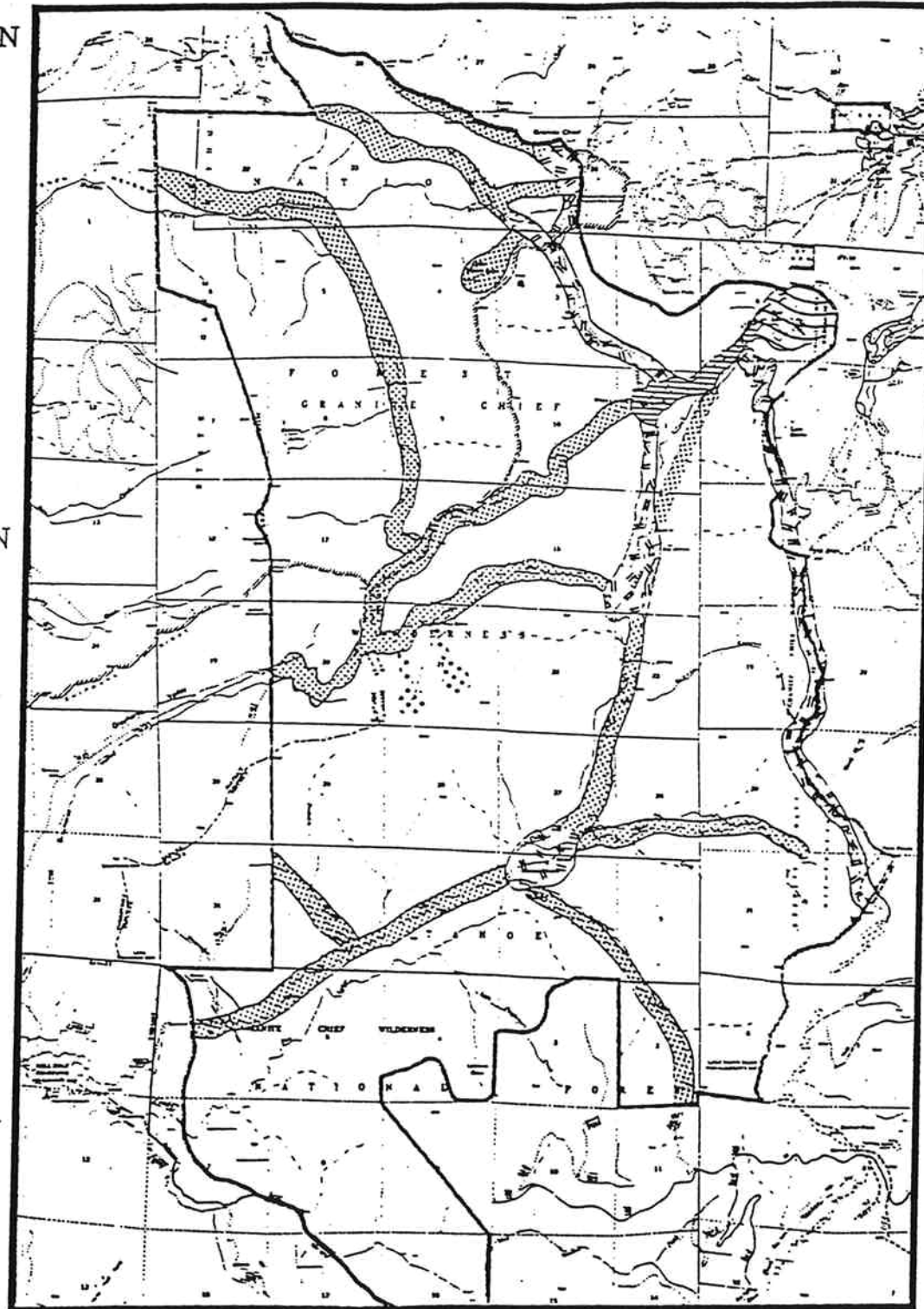
The following map illustrates how the Opportunity Levels were allocated in the Granite Chief. This allocation was developed through the Limits of Acceptable Change process and the Granite Chief Wilderness EA. Strategies for achieving these Wilderness Opportunity Levels are contained in the chapter on Specific Direction.

Wilderness Opportunity Levels

T16N

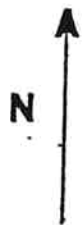
T15N

T14N









R14E

R15E



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
|  | WOL 1 |  | WOL 2 LONG TERM /
WOL 3-4 THIS DECADE |
|  | WOL 2 | | |
|  | WOL 3 | | |
|  | WOL 4 | | |
|  | SOCIAL WOL 4 / RESOURCE WOL 3 | | |

0 1 2
MILES

WOL DESCRIPTIONS

WILDERNESS OPPORTUNITY LEVEL I (Most Pristine)

Resource Setting

This area is characterized by an unmodified natural environment. Ecological and natural processes are not measurably affected by the actions of users. Environmental impacts are minimal, restricted to temporary loss of vegetation where camping occurs and along some livestock travel routes. They typically recover on an annual basis, are subtle in nature and are generally not apparent to most visitors.

Range condition is good, with a static to upward trend. There is no evidence of recreational stock use (dishing, root exposure, scars and broken branches, and damage to vegetation and soils from trampling). On sheep bedding grounds, vegetation may be lost and litter and duff is disturbed and/or pulverized. There is no noticeable erosion.

Campsites are not evident; no firerings are left in place and campsites do not exhibit any noticeable alteration of the duff and litter layer or loss of vegetation. There is no noticeable removal of woody debris or large downed logs from the building of campfires.

Water quality and riparian condition show no measurable degradation from 1992 levels. Visitor-created trails are not evident.

Wildlife behavior and habitat use patterns show no noticeable alteration. Habitat diversity is maintained entirely through natural forces such as fire, insects, and forest disease.

Social Setting

These areas provide an outstanding opportunity for isolation and solitude free from evidence of human activities and with very infrequent encounters with users. The user has outstanding opportunities to travel across country utilizing a maximum degree of outdoor skills, often in an environment that offers a very high degree of challenge, self-reliance and risk. Interparty contacts are rare to non-existent while traveling and at the campsite.

Management Setting

Management strongly emphasizes sustaining and enhancing the natural ecosystem. Direct onsite management of visitors will be seldom. Necessary rules and regulations are communicated to visitors outside the area, such as at trailheads or boundary portals. Contact of visitors within this class by Forest personnel is mostly reactive and by invitation, with discussion items limited to what visitors want to know. Formal and informal user education will be initiated to inform users about what to expect and how to use the area for optimum benefits to all. Formal regulations, orders, and/or permits will be considered only when less restrictive regulations or programs have consistently failed to achieve desired goals and objectives.

Infrequent patrols and monitoring of conditions by appropriate State and Federal agency personnel will be conducted only as necessary to achieve management objectives. All scientific and ecological monitoring actions are scheduled to meet social setting criteria.

No signs are present. Trails do not exist in these areas, and no facilities of any kind are provided or permitted.

Resource Setting

These areas are characterized by an essentially unmodified natural environment. Ecological and natural processes and conditions are minimally affected by the action of users. Environmental impacts are low and restricted to minor losses of vegetation where camping occurs and along most travel routes. Most impacts occur on an annual basis and are apparent to only a low number of visitors.

Range condition is good, with a static to upward trend. Evidence of recreational stock use is not apparent to the casual user. Impacts do not generally persist more than one year.

Site-specific soil compaction, loss of duff and litter, and erosion are minimal on campsites, social trails, and livestock areas.

There is a low concentration of campsites, with the majority of campsites consisting of a fire ring and one or two tent pads. Some campsites will accommodate larger groups, with a barren core for three or four tent pads. The core areas are expected to persist from year to year. There is no loss of large downed logs, and minimal loss of small woody debris from the building of campfires.

Water quality and riparian condition show no measurable degradation from 1992 levels. The formation of new visitor-created trails is not permitted, except minor trails associated with campsites if the trails are not causing resource damage.

No displacement of wildlife occurs during critical periods (birthing, fawning), and only temporary displacement occurs during non-critical periods. Habitat diversity is maintained entirely through natural forces such as fire, insects, and forest disease.

Social Setting

There is a high opportunity for exploring and experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of humans, with a low probability of encountering other users. The user has good opportunity for experiencing independence, closeness to nature, tranquility, and self-reliance through the application of primitive recreation skills. These opportunities occur in an environment that offers a high degree of challenge and risk. Interparty contacts are low on the trail and fairly low at the campsite, with parties often camped in isolation.

Where conflicts occur between domestic livestock and recreation, resolve the conflict in favor of recreation. This will include no sheep bedding or grazing along trails and at popular camping destinations. When passing through WOL II areas, sheep will be herded across trails at right angles.

Management Setting

Management emphasizes sustaining and enhancing the natural eco-system. Direct onsite management involves minimum visitor contact during the normal use season. Necessary rules and regulations are communicated to visitors outside the area, such as at trailheads and boundary portals. Contact of visitors by Forest personnel is mostly reactive and by invitation. In addition to what the visitor wants to know, the opportunity is seized to present other pertinent site-specific messages. Formal and informal user education will be initiated to inform users about what to expect and how to use the area for optimum benefits to all. Formal rules and regulations may be necessary to achieve management objectives, and permits may be considered only when light-handed, less restrictive measures have failed to achieve desired goals and objectives.

Signs are permitted within the area and provide only the minimum information necessary to protect the wilderness resource. Trails will normally be constructed, maintained and managed to accommodate light and infrequent travel. Routes will be maintained only for resource protection and minimal user safety. Any modification of the natural environment would be minimal. The route should provide the user with an opportunity for testing skills and experiencing a sensation of physical exertion and a feeling of accomplishment.

Resource Setting

These areas are characterized by an essentially unmodified natural environment where ecological and natural processes are, in a few areas, moderately affected by the action of users. Environmental impact are moderate with most areas along travel routes and near campsites showing moderate losses of vegetation. Impacts in some areas often persist from year to year and are apparent to a moderate number of visitors.

The condition of the range is good, with a static to upward trend. Evidence of recreational stock use is apparent to the casual user on a small number of campsites. On these sites, vegetation loss may persist from year to year.

There is moderate soil compaction and minimal erosion on some campsites, social trails, and areas used by recreational livestock and for sheep bedding.

WOL III areas may have a moderate concentration of campsites, with the total number of sites high enough to accommodate peak use in order to prevent the creation of new sites. Some campsites are within sight of each other. Though most sites are small, with a barren core allowed for a fire ring and one or two tent pads, some sites will accommodate larger groups, with a barren core for three or four tents. This unvegetated area persists from year to year. Campfire building cause a minimal loss of large downed logs, and moderate loss of small woody debris.

Water quality and riparian condition show no measurable degradation from 1992 levels. The formation of new visitor-created trails is not permitted, except minor trails associated with campsites if the trails are not causing resource damage.

Wildlife experiences temporary displacement. Habitat diversity is maintained entirely through natural forces such as fire, insects, and forest disease.

Social Setting

There are moderate opportunities for exploring and experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of man, with a low to moderate probability of encountering other users. The user has moderate opportunities for experiencing independence, closeness to nature, tranquility and self-reliance through the application of primitive recreation skills. These opportunities occur in a natural environment that normally offers a moderate degree of challenge and risk. Contact with other visitors on the trail and while camped are moderately frequent.

Shepherders will generally avoid WOL III areas to minimize conflicts with recreationists. Where conflicts occur between domestic livestock and recreation, resolve the conflict in favor of recreation. This will include no sheep bedding or grazing along trails and at popular camping destinations. When passing through WOL III areas, sheep will be herded across trails at right angles.

Management Setting

Management emphasizes sustaining and enhancing the natural ecosystem. Onsite management involves routine visitor contact. Necessary rules and regulations are communicated to visitors outside the area, such as at trailheads and boundary portals. Contact is initiated by Forest personnel during routine duties. Information concerning protection of site-specific wilderness resources is presented. Formal and informal user education will be initiated to inform users about what to expect and how to use the area for optimum benefits to all. Formal regulations may be necessary to achieve management objectives.

Signs are permitted, but kept to the minimum number necessary to protect the wilderness resource and for administration. Trails are normally constructed, maintained, and managed to accommodate moderate use while emphasizing resource protection. A few facilities may be provided or permitted, and only those necessary for the protection of the wilderness resource. Natural materials will dominate.

Resource Setting

These areas are characterized by a predominantly unmodified natural environment where ecological and natural processes are, in many locations, affected by the action of users. Environmental impacts are generally obvious to most visitors in areas along major travel routes, lake shores, camping destinations, and near major entry points. Impacts usually persist from year to year, and there may be moderate loss of vegetation and soil at some sites.

Range condition is good, in static to upward condition. Evidence of recreational stock use is apparent to the casual user on a small number of campsites. On these sites, vegetation loss persists from year to year.

Moderate soil compaction and/or loss of vegetation, litter, and duff is expected on many visitor-created trails, camp areas, and areas used by recreational stock. Impacts from recreational stock are apparent to users and could be expected to persist indefinitely on some sites. Some erosion occurs on the disturbed sites. At heavily-used campsites, sterilized soil (from campfires) is evident. Campfire activity causes a loss of small woody debris at many campsites, and loss of large downed logs at some campsites.

Concentration of campsites is moderately high. The number of sites accommodates peak use in order to prevent the formation of new sites. Many sites are within sight and sound of others. Most sites are small, accommodating a fire ring and one or two tent pads, but a small number of sites will accommodate larger groups, with a barren core allowed for three or four tent pads. This unvegetated area persists from year to year.

Water quality shows no measurable degradation from 1992 levels. Some changes in riparian condition persist from year to year. The formation of new visitor-created trails is not permitted, except minor trails associated with campsites if the trails are not causing resource damage.

Displacement of wildlife or alteration of behavior is expected to occur within 200 yards of trail systems and camping areas. Habitat diversity is maintained entirely through natural forces such as fire, insects, and forest disease.

Social Setting

These areas have moderate to low opportunities for exploring and experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of humans, with a moderate to high probability of encountering other users. The user has the opportunity for a high degree of interaction with the natural environment, often with low or moderate challenge and risk. Contact with other users is relatively high much of the time, both on the trail and at campsites. Some parties may camp out of sight and sound of other parties, but this is not common during the main-use season.

Shepherders will generally avoid WOL IV areas to minimize conflicts with recreationists. Where conflicts occur between domestic livestock and recreation, resolve the conflict in favor of recreation. This will include no sheep bedding or grazing along trails and at popular camping destinations. When passing through WOL IV areas, sheep will be herded across trails at right angles.

Management Setting

Management is oriented to sustaining and enhancing the natural ecosystem. There is frequent opportunity for visitor contact with management personnel. Necessary rules and regulations are usually communicated to visitors outside the area, such as at trailheads and boundary portals. Special efforts are taken to contact visitors. Information concerning wilderness management, user conflicts, fire prevention and other pertinent subjects is presented. Formal and informal user education will be initiated to inform users about what to expect and how to use the area for optimum benefits to all. Formal rules and regulations may be necessary to achieve management objectives, and permits may be considered only when light-handed, less restrictive measures have failed to achieve desired goals and objectives. (Continued...)

Signs within the wilderness may be placed to aid in distributing and dispersing use and for resource protection purposes. Trails will normally be constructed and maintained to accommodate moderately high use while emphasizing resource protection. Facilities and improvements may be provided and permitted for resource protection or user safety. If constructed, facilities will emphasize the use of natural materials.

CHAPTER 3

INDICATORS AND STANDARDS and ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARDS ARE EXCEEDED

THE SELECTION OF INDICATORS AND STANDARDS

Resource and social conditions will vary across the spectrum represented by the four Wilderness Opportunity Levels. These differences provide a diversity of experiences, use levels, and management goals. For instance, easily accessible areas such as Five Lakes will provide a different experience and have different resource and managerial conditions than would be found along the remote and little-used Hellhole trail.

Using the description of Wilderness Opportunity Levels, indicators and standards were developed to reflect the desired resource, social, and managerial conditions in each level and to assure those conditions are maintained. Indicators will be monitored, alerting managers to situations where conditions may have deteriorated and compromised management objectives. Indicators were selected based on their relevance to Granite Chief issues, their ability to be measured reliably and practically, their sensitivity to changing conditions, and their responsiveness to management actions.

Limited and conflicting information is available on LAC indicators (Merigliano, 1987). The LAC process has not been in place long enough in Wilderness areas throughout the country for there to be definitive agreement regarding the success and usefulness of many of the indicators. Consequently, some indicators may prove less useful than others as they are field tested over the years. LAC is a dynamic process, and though indicators in this chapter have been identified to the best of the Interdisciplinary Team's knowledge and with a great deal of research and discussion, an indicator may be changed in the future if field testing shows that it is unreliable, impractical, unresponsive to management actions, or not sensitive enough to changing conditions on the ground.

After indicators were identified, each was assigned a standard. A standard is a quantitative value that becomes, literally, the "limit of acceptable change" for the indicator. An indicator may be assigned different standards for each WOL or for different camping zones if it is determined that conditions should vary in different areas of the wilderness. For instance, the standard for social encounters is higher in the heavily-used WOL IV areas than in the remote WOL I areas. If there are indicators for resources such as wildlife that are not static in one WOL or zone, they will be assigned one standard common to the entire wilderness.

GCW INDICATORS AND STANDARDS

Listed below are the indicators and standards that have been selected so far for the Granite Chief. Also included is a brief description of the methodology that will be used to survey each indicator and a reference telling you where to find the in-depth methodology, forms, and maps for conducting the surveys. Also listed are Actions to take if the standard is exceeded. When choosing actions, managers should first attempt the least intrusive action (the minimum tool) that is believed to be effective. The actions have been listed roughly in order of increasing restriction; however, the appropriateness of one action over another will depend on the causal agent and the extent of the problem.

INDICATOR: SQUARE FEET OF BARREN CORE on campsites by zone.

STANDARD: The "Yellow light" standard is an increase in Barren Core of 50% or more in each zone as compared with the zone's Barren Core total from the original 1988/89 survey. This is a "warning" standard that lets you know that campsite conditions are deteriorating.

"Red light" standard is an increase in Barren Core of 100% or more in each zone as compared with the zone's Barren Core total from the original 1988/89 survey.

Note: For zones that have fewer than 4 or 5 sites, or zones whose 1988/89 baseline Barren Core was very low (in the neighborhood of 500 square feet or less), the Yellow and Red light standards become meaningless. See Actions, below, for how to address these zones.

METHODOLOGY: Barren Core is one of the parameters measured by the wilderness ranger when conducting the Campsite Impact Inventory. Directions for measuring Barren Core are included in the methodology for Campsite Impact Inventory (Form #7), which can be found in Appendix N.

Barren Core is defined as the area of a campsite that is devoid of vegetation, though it may be covered with duff and litter. Barren core will be measured whenever a campsite is re-inventoried, which is once every 5 years.

FORM #: Field Form is #7 (Campsite Impact Inventory Form), Appendix N. Office Summary Form is #1 (Re-Inventory, Barren Core and Impact Index) in Appendix K.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED:

The Wilderness Manager should look at the bottom of Form #1 to see if the "Percent increase in Barren Core" exceeds the Yellow or Red light standards shown in the box. (The Yellow standard would most likely be exceeded before the Red standard unless Barren Core increased so much that it surpassed the Yellow standard between surveys.)

For Zones with Few Sites or Very Low Baseline Barren Core

In zones with fewer than 4 or 5 campsites or whose baseline Barren Core was very low (between 0 and 500 square feet), the Yellow and Red light standards will often be meaningless. In these zones, small changes such as adding one new campsite to the zone or a campsite increasing in Barren Core from 0 to 100 square feet could cause the entire zone to exceed the standard, even though the actual Barren Core increase on the ground would be minimal. In these zones, keep an eye on Barren Core but do not use it as an indicator; instead, use Impact Index and Number of Groups Camped Within Sight or Sound as indicators of campsite impacts.

The following zones have either a Baseline Barren Core of less than 500 square feet OR fewer than 6 campsites in the zone:

- * Western States trail west of Whiskey Ck.
- * South of Big Springs to Diamond Crossing
- * Shanks Cove and Trail (Note that Crane camp is being managed separately because of its isolated location and history of use.)
- * Bear Pen
- * Upper Middle Fork American
- * Little American Valley
- * Mildred Lakes
- * Little Needle Lake

As long as each campsite in the above zones stays at approximately 200 square feet of Barren Core or less per site, conditions are probably acceptable, but of course it depends on the sites' locations. Two hundred square feet of Barren Core is approximately equal to a 15 by 13 foot area, which could easily exist at a campsite that has a tent pad and a small fire ring.

It is also important to consider that if a 10 foot by 15 foot campsite has very sparse vegetation cover, but the vegetation is evenly distributed throughout the site, Barren Core is considered "zero." After only a couple nights of use, the site could easily become barren. On the monitoring forms, it will look as though this site went from 0 square feet of Barren core to 150 square feet of Barren Core almost overnight. In reality, the site might have only lost a few percent vegetation cover. (This is not to say that the last little bit of vegetation is not important; it could be critical in helping the site re-seed and revegetate itself. But this example shows how a site can increase in Barren Core without there necessarily being a drastic change on the ground.)

In the above zones, it is wise to refer to the Campsite Impact Inventory forms to find out more details about the sites in a zone before taking action.

For Zones with 6 or More Sites or a Total Barren Core over 500 Sq.Ft.

Zones which fall into this category are:

- * Five Lakes outlet
- * Whiskey Creek proper
- * South of Whiskey to Big Springs and Loop
- * Diamond Crossing proper
- * Picayune Valley and lower Middle Fork American

If either the Yellow or Red standard is exceeded in these zones, first consider that Barren Core is an estimate and is difficult to measure precisely. Research has shown that although it is one of the best indicators for increased use of a campsite, there can be variation in Barren Core estimates among different surveyors looking at the same piece of ground. (This is why cover classes are used on Form #7; the classes tend to even out discrepancies among surveyors). For this reason, a rather large increase in Barren Core (50% for Yellow and 100% for Red) is allowed before actions are taken.

Secondly, see if Impact Index was exceeded for any of the campsites in that zone. Consider these two indicators together before taking actions. Because Barren Core is one of the components of Impact Index, the two have a fairly linear relationship. However, it is possible for Barren Core to increase without Impact Index doing so, and visa versa. You may have to read through the description of Impact Index to understand how the two indicators can affect each other.

Institute the following actions when you are sure that a zone has truly grown in Barren Core and exceeded the standard. (These actions are for zones with greater than 6 campsites or with a Baseline Barren Core of 500 square feet or more.)

"Yellow Light" actions: provide information and education, increase wilderness ranger contacts, harden campsite if appropriate (such as install drainage or check dams on social trails, provide temporary hitchrails at heavily used stock sites, rehabilitate and blockade portion of site that is causing concern, such as in a riparian zone), designate certain campsites for packstock use, permanently close and rehabilitate campsite if visitor use can be shifted appropriately to a more resilient site, prohibit dogs overnight as a way of indirectly reducing overnight visitor use.

If cause of Barren core increase seems to be attributable to new sites (added since 1993) as opposed to enlargement of old sites, then one of your actions should be to consider instituting a new indicator for "total sites per zone" and setting standards for each zone.

"Red Light" actions: institute a permit system for overnight stock users or for all overnight users, institute a quota system for overnight stock users or for all overnight users, close certain areas to stock use, close areas to all overnight use.

INDICATOR: IMPACT INDEX. This is a composite rating of a campsite's impacts, computed on the Campsite Impact Inventory form.

STANDARD: An increase of 10 points from the original campsite survey. Most campsites were originally surveyed in 1988 and 1989; however, some were, and will continue to be, more recently discovered or created and will therefore have a more recent "original survey" date.

METHODOLOGY: The Wilderness Ranger will compute Impact Index as part of the Campsite Impact Inventory Form (#7). This can be found in Appendix N.

FORM #: Field Form is #7 (Campsite Impact Inventory Form)
Office Summary Forms are: #1 (Re-Inv, Bare Core and Impact Index)
#2 (Campsites increasing in Impact Index by 10 or more points). Both forms are in Appendix K.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: The Wilderness Ranger will identify on Form #1 any sites that increased in Impact Index by more than 10 points and will enter these campsites onto Form #2. Form #2 describes the parameters which were most responsible for the site's increase in impacts. The wilderness ranger will do this by looking at past inventory forms and identifying trends.

The wilderness manager will refer to Form #2 and ask the following questions regarding the parameters that caused the most increase in campsite impacts:

1. Is it immediately controllable? In other words, is the problem trash that can be packed out, or developments such as fire rings or log seats that can be dismantled with some time and labor? If so, the problems can be taken care of relatively easily and may not be a "serious" problem. Place any actions that will be taken on campsites in the Campsite Work Summary, GCW Form #9. Also place a reminder in the WIS to check the Campsite Work Summary next season for any campsites that will need attention that field season.

2. Is it NOT immediately controllable, such as barren core, vegetation loss, tree damage, a new social trail, root exposure, or impacts specifically related to recreational stock such as tree damage from improper tying, prolonged picketing that leads to denuding of vegetation, or a decrease in riparian vegetation density as compared to the surroundings? If so, this is more serious. Ask: Are there resource concerns? If so, evaluate whether the impacts are isolated to this campsite or are occurring on other sites in the general area.

A. If the damage is ISOLATED to a particular campsite, you must decide if it is "acceptable," given the location, type of impact, etc. For instance, a site may have increased from an Impact Index of 22 (the lowest possible rating) to 34. This is an increase of 12 points, and therefore exceeds the standard, yet the site may still be relatively small and unobtrusive. If this were one of the Whiskey Creek sites, it may be acceptable allow the impacts to stay since camping restrictions in the vicinity of the cabins

will undoubtedly result in increased use at other campsites in the Whiskey Creek area.

If a campsite went from an Impact Index of 35 to 48 and it was in the vicinity of a few existing large sites, you may want to take action to decrease the impacts if you feel that the site should be kept moderately-sized and that there are other large sites already available in the area.

1) ACTIONS TO TAKE ON AN ISOLATED CAMPSITE:

a. For Stock-related impacts: fill in any dishing from stock, harden campsite if appropriate (this could include installing drainage or check dams on social trails, encourage use of temporary hitchrails at heavily used stock sites, rehabilitate and blockade portion of site that is causing concern, such as in a riparian zone).

b. For Backpacking-related impacts: remove trash and inappropriate developments, harden campsite if appropriate (this could include installing drainage or check dams on social trails, rehabilitate and blockade portion of site that is causing concern, such as in a riparian zone), permanently close and rehabilitate campsite if it is determined that visitor use can be shifted appropriately to a more resilient site.

2. If you decide that actions should be taken on a campsite, enter the specific work to be done on the Campsite Work Summary (Form #9) and the WIS for the next field season. The WIS can refer to Form #9 for specifics.

- B. If there is WIDESPREAD CAMPSITE DEGRADATION, whether in a zone, such as Diamond Crossing, or the entire wilderness, it may indicate a larger problem for the Granite Chief. Identify, if possible, the cause(s) of the increased damage to help you decide on the appropriate course of action. In general, implement the following actions in the general order they are listed, from least-intrusive to most-intrusive. It is possible that the cause of degradation cannot be attributed to any particular user group and is instead the result of an overall increase in visitor numbers. If this is the case, you may want to choose actions that are more widespread in nature, such as designating campsites or instituting a permit system for all overnight campers.

1. ACTIONS FOR OVERALL CAMPSITE DEGRADATION INCLUDE:

a. For stock-related impacts: trailhead signing including "you are responsible for knowing the regulations;" brochure at trailhead suggesting actions such as filling in dished areas; require using a hitchline or a 100 foot setback from water; designate certain campsites for stock (choose appropriate site where erosion will be minimal); limit length of time stock can stay in one area or one campsite; further limit group size for stock (could be area specific or wilderness-wide); require carrying in feed (request the use of "weed-free" feed), institute a permit system for overnight stock, a

quota for overnight stock use, or closure areas where stock is completely prohibited.

b. For backpacking-related impacts: Provide information and education, increase wilderness ranger contacts, prohibit dogs overnight in the wilderness as an indirect way of reducing visitation, limit length of stay for overnight visitors, further reduce group size limits for stock users, close certain areas to stock use or to all overnight use, institute a permit system, quota system.

c. For impacts related to snags. Check to see whether campsites have the type of impacts that might indicate a decrease in snag density. Look for mention of the following impacts on Form #2:

- * Developments, such as constructed benches and tables
- * Evidence of saw and axe use, such as stumps
- * Very large fire rings capable of burning large logs
- * Woodpile with large diameter logs
- * No firewood within 100 feet of campsite (page one of Form #7)

If the above impacts seem to be occurring in the Diamond Crossing, Big Springs, or lower Shanks Creek areas, it is possible that campers could be causing a decrease in snag density which, in turn, could be adversely affecting spotted owl habitat. If the information supplied on Form #2 is not detailed enough, you should refer to each campsite's Form #7 (campsite impact inventory form) for more specific information. If you believe that snag density could be decreasing, consult with the Wildlife Biologist to decide whether to conduct a snag survey (see Form #19, the accompanying methodology, and 1993 map of spotted owl habitat in Appendix U.)

It is possible in the future that the Regional guidelines for spotted owl habitat and analysis will change. Therefore, it is recommended that if snag density appears to be threatened in the area from Whiskey Creek Camp to Diamond Crossing or in Little American Valley, the wilderness manager should consult the Wildlife Biologist.

INDICATOR: Number of ENCOUNTERS PER DAY While Traveling

STANDARD:

Wilderness Opportunity Level (WOL)	Number of Encounters
I	0 parties
II	Up to 4 parties per day
III	Up to 7 parties per day
IV	Up to 12 parties per day

METHODOLOGY: The wilderness ranger will record the number of contacts on individual trail segments and compute "encounters per day." A detailed methodology can be found under Appendix L.

FORM #: All forms can be found in Appendix L.

The Field form is #3. There are a total of 23 forms; one form for each trail segment.

The Office Summary forms are #4a for Foresthill District trails and #4b for Truckee District trails.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED:

On the Office Summary Forms (4a and 4b), the manager should scan the column that says "Was Standard Exceeded?" If the column contains all "NO's," then you do not need to take any action. However, it would be useful to glance down column 4 ("Average Number of Groups Exceeded per Day") and compare it with the standards in column 3 to see if conditions are close to exceeding the standard anywhere. If, by chance, all or most of the trail segments are very close to exceeding their standards, you will want to watch this indicator very closely over the next few seasons and you might even consider trying to collect a greater quantity of data during that time so you can confirm the increasing trend with statistical confidence.

If there are any "YES's" in the "Was Standard Exceeded?" column, look at the values in column 4, "Average Number of Encounters per Day," to see how much the standard was exceeded by. These Standards are relatively low numbers, so make sure you realize that even though exceeding the standard by, say, a couple of tenths may not seem like much, it could be significant if the standard is "0.5."

Also look at the column that says "Percent of Time Standard was Exceeded." Do not worry if the percent of time the standard was exceeded was 10% or less, but take into consideration the total number of trips taken and the fact that the data will be somewhat skewed due to the rangers working weekends and holidays, and having their days off on the less crowded midweek days. (Field Forms #3 records whether the data was collected on a weekend/holiday or not).

If the ranger only visited the Hellhole trail once and it happened to be on the day of the "Where the Hell is Hellhole" race, then the data would show one entry with 45 groups encountered. Form #4 would tell you that encounters on the Hellhole trail were exceeded 100% of the time. So consider that that kind of situation could skew the data unfairly. But you must also keep in mind that the areas in which the wilderness rangers do not often go to collect data are also the remote areas where visitors expect a high degree of solitude. So if standards are exceeded in these remote areas for a number of years, the manager should consider having the ranger visit the area more frequently the following season or perhaps installing a trail counting device to collect more data to verify the increasing trend. (P.S.-- the Hellhole race is fictitious.)

If the standard for a trail segment is exceeded and you feel that there was enough data to lend statistical significance, you should consider where the segment is and whether it can be addressed on its own. If the segment adjoins the wilderness boundary and leads to popular destinations such as Five Lakes, Picayune Valley, or one of the many destinations just west of Squaw Valley, then it may be possible to take actions on that segment of trail alone. If the segment is in the interior of the wilderness, the manager should look at the data for other nearby segments to see if the standards are close to being

exceeded. If the surrounding segments are nowhere near being exceeded, then consider this a fluke of sorts and make sure the segment is surveyed adequately the next season to confirm the data.

The last 2 columns on the form tell you the average number of individual people and individual pack/saddle animals encountered per day. Though there is not a standard tied to "individuals," this information lets you know something about the size of the groups encountered. The ranger may have only encountered 2 groups per day, but if the average number of individuals encountered per day was 10, this lets you know that some of the groups were quite large. This information may be useful in relation to other indicators, for instance, if campsite size begins to increase.

If the standards for a trail segment or a portion or most of the wilderness have been exceeded and you feel that the data accurately reflect what is going on in the field, then take the following actions:

Actions: prohibit dogs on the Five Lakes trail as a way to indirectly reduce use on trails in the Five Lakes and Whiskey Creek areas; reduce those components of trail maintenance standards that deal with "user friendliness," such as brushing and loose rock removal, to discourage use; reduce trailhead signing and, if possible, trailhead parking; limit length of stay in areas where standards are exceeded, institute an office-issue permit system to try to re-direct people first away from the wilderness or to areas that can handle the use without dispersing the problem to another area (this should be used with caution, as dispersal often results in increased impacts elsewhere in the wilderness), institute a quota system for summer use in affected areas, further limit group size of people and/or stock as a method of indirectly discouraging use.

INDICATOR: Number of GROUPS CAMPED WITHIN SIGHT OR SOUND of Your Campsite.

STANDARD:

Wilderness Opportunity Level (WOL)	Number of Groups Camped Within Sight or Sound
I	0
II	1
III	2
IV	3

METHODOLOGY: Wilderness ranger will record the number of groups camped within sight and sound, based on their own camping experiences and data from wilderness visitors. A detailed methodology can be found in Appendix M.

FORM #: Both forms are found in Appendix M. The Field Form is #5, and the Office Summary Form is #6.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: manage campsites to aid in privacy (keep sites that provide visual and sound barriers); information and education to get campers to practice low impact techniques (bring a minimum of gear, use natural colors that blend with landscape, respect the privacy of others, keep noise low in the evenings, choose a site away from other campers); increase ranger presence and front desk information dispersal to encourage campers to look around for a good site instead of choosing the first one they come to; suggest alternatives to the areas where standards are being exceeded (use this with great discretion; do not disperse visitors to areas of greater purity than the person was seeking. If a visitor was looking for a WOL III camping experience, suggest another WOL III area. Never encourage use to Little Needle or Mildred Lakes); institute a trailhead permit for overnight users for the primary purpose of dispersing information on low impact camping techniques, institute an office-issue permit system for overnight users, institute a quota in certain areas or wilderness wide for overnight users.

INDICATOR: NEW SOCIAL TRAILS IN THE LAKE BASINS and Continued Use of Closed Trails.

STANDARD: There will be no new trails in the lakes basins, and there will be no use of closed trails.

METHODOLOGY: The wilderness ranger will map the current system of social trails in the lakes basins. Management will decide which trails to retain and perform maintenance on, and which to close and rehabilitate. Future monitoring will consist of visual observations, mapping, and recording of new trails and continued use of closed trails by wilderness ranger. A detailed methodology is located in Appendix Q.

FORM #: Form #10. There will be one of these forms for each lake, or each lake basin, depending on the number of trails that exist and can fit on one form. They can be found in Appendix Q.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: examine why closed trail continues to get use; sign the closed trail with an explanation of trail closure and perhaps an arrow pointing to alternative trail; actively rehabilitate unwanted trails and disguise or make impassible with logs, etc.; if a closed trail continues to get use because it is a shortcut and the alternative trail goes against human nature to use, you might decide to keep the shortcut trail and harden it by installing proper drainage to minimize impacts; brochure at trailhead explaining problem with social trails; increase ranger presence; limit visitors indirectly by prohibiting dogs (this will discourage 5-10% of Five Lakes users); institute a trailhead permit system to disperse information, institute an office-issue permit system, institute a quota. Permits and quotas might only need to be issued to certain user groups; day users only or overnight users only, depending on who is using the affected lake basin.

INDICATOR: **FECAL STREP AND FECAL COLIFORM BACTERIA at Shanks Cove hunters' camp.**

STANDARD: Interim Standard, through 1997: the average bacterial count (for both strep and coliform) will be less than or equal to 200 bacteria per 100 ml sample.

Permanent Standard, beginning 1998: the average bacterial count (for both strep and coliform) will be less than or equal to 50 bacteria per 100 ml sample.

METHODOLOGY: The Wilderness ranger will collect water samples before and after hunting season. Sampling frequency depends on the attainment of standards. A detailed methodology is contained in Appendix R.

FORM #: Form #11, in Appendix R.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: The standard for fecal strep was greatly exceeded at Shanks Cove during the first two years of testing in 1991 and 1992. The levels dropped dramatically in 1993 to well within the "permanent standard," probably due to a combination of willow planting in the riparian areas, a year of heavy runoff (and therefore flushing of the manure and bacteria), and encouraging the hunters to keep fewer horses in camp and to practice minimum impact tying and grazing techniques.

Because fecal strep existed in such high quantities relative to coliform, the cause was attributed to livestock (as explained in the ratios on Form #11). Therefore, the following actions are targetted at reducing livestock impacts.

Continue present efforts to encourage hunters to keep fewer horses in camp and to confine them well away from riparian areas; continue willow planting at Crane camp to improve riparian condition and create a natural filter between human/stock activities and water; require a temporary hitchrail or hitchline with location to be decided by FS; restrict the number of "stock nights" that can be used at the camp; prohibit overnight stock at the camp.

INDICATOR: **CONDITION AND TREND (C & T) RANGE TRANSECTS.**

STANDARD: Maintain range condition at good quality or better, and in a static or upward trend.

METHODOLOGY: Range Con will read each transect using established Regional protocol once every 5 years. Most transects have already been established, though some new ones will be established in 1993 and 1994.

FORM #: There is a standard range form used for C&T's, but there is no specific Granite Chief form. After reading transects, Range Con

should send copies of forms to Wilderness Manager for tracking purposes.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED:

If domestic livestock (sheep, cattle) are the cause, actions will be addressed in the Annual Operating Plan and the Allotment Management Plan. Actions could include changes in timing, herding methods, and numbers of stock.

If recreational livestock is the cause, actions could include trailhead signing such as "you are responsible for knowing the regulations," distribute brochure at trailheads informing visitors of low impact grazing practices, limit amount of time a party can stay in one area or one campsite, designate stock campsites, further limit group size for overnight stock use, require carrying in feed (request use of "weed-free"), institute a permit system for overnight stock use, a quota for overnight stock use, or a prohibition on stock use in certain areas.

INDICATOR: RIPARIAN AND STREAM CHANNEL CONDITION.

STANDARD: Any noticeable degradation in riparian zones from 1994 levels or unacceptable conditions such as sediment entering creek during storm, root exposure over 12 inches on social trails, pedestaling, rills or gullies, bank undercut or collapsed, weathering rinds or lichen lines on rocks, decrease in riparian vegetation density compared to surroundings, recreational stock activities within 25 feet of riparian, or bedrock exposed.

METHODOLOGY: Photo points will be established in 1994 in areas of existing or potential livestock damage, such as stringer meadows where cattle are concentrated around water and campsites used by recreational stock. The wilderness ranger will take photos every 1-5 years depending on resource deterioration and recovery. A detailed methodology for establishing and monitoring photo points is located in Appendix S.

FORM #: Forms can be found in Appendix S. The Field Form is #12, and the Office Summary Form is #13.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: Soils specialist and hydrologist will evaluate photos at the end of each year they are taken. If degradation or any of the above conditions are detected in riparian zones, specialists will make recommendations for further actions, visiting site in field if possible.

A. Recreational Stock

1. For isolated problems, actions could include: harden campsite if appropriate (install drainage or check dams on social trails, encourage use of temporary hitchrails at heavily used stock sites, rehabilitate and blockade portion of site that is causing concern).

2. For more widespread degradation, actions could include: trailhead signing including "you are responsible for knowing the regulations;" brochure at trailhead suggesting actions such as filling in dished areas; require using a hitchline or a 100 foot setback from water; designate resilient campsites for stock; limit length of time stock can stay in one area or one campsite; further limit group size for stock (could be area specific or wilderness-wide); require carrying in feed (request the use of "weed-free feed), institute a permit system for overnight stock, a quota for overnight stock use, or close certain areas to stock.

B. Domestic livestock

Actions will be addressed in the Annual Operating Plan and the Allotment Management Plan. Actions could include changes in timing, herding methods, and numbers of stock.

INDICATOR: WATER CLARITY AT FIVE LAKES.

STANDARD: Water clarity will exhibit a stable or improving trend.

METHODOLOGY: Clarity will be measured by the wilderness ranger to protocol in 1994 using a Secchi disk, then every 5 to 10 years thereafter, depending on other disturbances measured at Five Lakes (such as degradation of social trails, creation of new social trails, unsuccessful revegetation, etc.). A detailed methodology is located in Appendix T.

FORM #: Form #14, in Appendix T.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: Reduce soil loss around the lakes by taking actions such as closing and rehabilitating social trails that lead to the water's edge, actively preventing erosion by building check dams or transplanting native vegetation, increase ranger contacts and signing to gain compliance with social trail closures, prohibit dogs as an indirect method of reducing visitors, institute an office-issue permit for summertime, institute a quota on weekends and holidays, or a quota for the entire summer.

INDICATOR: HEALTH OF THE AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM as indicated by macroinvertebrates.

STANDARD: There will be no decrease in the overall health of the system, as indicated by a shift in community structure or decline in diversity as interpreted by a fisheries biologist or hydrologist in combination with other factors measured concurrently, such as stream channel condition, temperature, etc.

METHODOLOGY: Forest Fisheries Biologist will survey macroinvertebrates in Picayune Valley/Middle Fork of the American beginning in 1994 and continuing, if needed, into 1995 to establish baseline. Subsequent surveys will occur every 5 to 10 years thereafter, depending on the level of disturbance shown in other forms of monitoring, such as photo points and campsite-related impacts. It is possible in the future that macroinvertebrate sampling will be discontinued once cattle are no longer in Picayune and if the level of riparian disturbance is low. Monitoring will be to protocol as identified by the Fisheries Biologist.

FORM #: There is no established GCW form.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: Increase sampling frequency and/or intensity to verify findings if necessary (i.e.; sample again in a year to see if impacts still exist or were short term).

If problem is human-caused sedimentation or riparian impact, take the following actions: provide information and education; increase wilderness ranger contacts; close and rehabilitate social trails leading from campsites to water; harden campsite if appropriate (such as install drainage or check dams on social trails, provide temporary hitchrails at heavily used stock sites, rehabilitate and blockade portion of site that is causing concern, such as in a riparian zone); require a 100 foot setback for overnight stock use; require stock users to camp in designated campsites; permanently close and rehabilitate campsite if visitor use can be shifted appropriately to a more resilient site; prohibit dogs overnight as a way of indirectly reducing overnight visitor use; institute a permit system for overnight use (stock and/or all users); institute a quota system for overnight use (stock and/or all users); close certain areas to stock use; close areas to all overnight use.

If problem is caused by domestic livestock, Foresthill resources staff and Eastside Range Con will be involved. Actions will be addressed in Annual Operating Plan.

If problem is atmospheric, the Forest Service would consider this information when making decisions or providing professional input regarding permits and projects on or off the forest that could contribute to further deterioration of air quality.

INDICATOR: PRESENCE OF NON-NATIVE PLANT SPECIES IN RIPARIAN AREAS.

STANDARD: We will strive to have none of the following non-native plant species present in the Granite Chief Wilderness:

Dalmation toadflax	<u>Linaria genistifolia</u> ssp. <u>dalmatica</u>
Spotted knapweed	<u>Centaurea maculosa</u>
Diffuse knapweed	<u>Centaurea diffusa</u>
Hoary cress	<u>Cardaria draba</u>
Scotch thistle	<u>Onopordum acanthium</u>
Purple loosestrife	<u>Lythrum salicaria</u>

Gorse	<u>Ulex eropaea</u>
Musk thistle	<u>Carduus nutans</u>
Halogeton	<u>Halogeton glomeratus</u>
Skeleton weed	<u>Chondrilla juncea</u>
Canada thistle	<u>Cirsium arvense</u>
Perennial peppergrass	<u>Lepidium latifolium</u>
Oblong spurge	<u>Euphorbia oblongata</u>
Distaff thistle	<u>Carthamus lanatus</u>
Dryer's woad	<u>Isatis tinctoria</u>

METHODOLOGY: Visual identification of plants. Map location and extent if found. A written methodology can be found in Appendix V.

FORM #: Form 18, in Appendix V.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: Pull up plants if possible. If extensive, pursue possibility of training volunteers (such as local wildflower groups) to identify and pull up plants. If non-natives appear to be introduced through stock feed, increase educational efforts through trailhead signing and contacting local riding groups, Backcountry Horsemen of California, etc.

If necessary, begin a permit system for overnight stock users to effect more direct control of the problem. Restrict or prohibit overnight stock use. If establishment of plants is caused or encouraged by ground disturbances, take the following actions depending on the cause: increase education and ranger presence; trailhead signing to make public aware of problem and what they can do to minimize impacts; restrict use in certain areas; eradicate (if possible) and rehabilitate area of disturbance by transplanting native plants, controlling erosion, etc.

INDICATOR: HUMAN-CAUSED DAMAGE TO WHISKEY CREEK CABINS.

STANDARDS: 1) Any structural damage to the cabins.
2) Any public safety concerns.
3) Any new cosmetic damage to the outside of the cabins.

METHODOLOGY: Truckee District Archaeologist will monitor according to established protocol.

FORM #: Form 20, in Appendix W.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARDS ARE EXCEEDED:
These refer to the 3 numbered standards above.

1 and 2) Repair or replace damaged element. If damage is extensive, re-evaluate the integrity of the cabin and do not repair if damage is beyond the realm of routine maintenance and stability. Increase ranger presence in the area; increase frequency of monitoring.

3) Restore damage by sanding and filling as soon as possible after damage is detected to prevent it from encouraging more of the same type of vandalism. Increase ranger presence.

INDICATOR: HUMAN-CAUSED DAMAGE TO PETROGLYPH PANEL, including new carvings, chalking, paint, bullet holes, etc.

STANDARD: No new damage permitted.

METHODOLOGY: Foresthill District Archaeologist will monitor to protocol.

FORM #: Form 20, in Appendix W.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: contact known groups and individuals who are advertising trips into the wilderness for the purpose of visiting the panels, disguise any social trails to the panels and remove cairns indicating the route, increase ranger presence and law enforcement, place interpretive sign at trailhead (addressing petroglyphs and their protection, but not location of panels), begin active education program with brochures at trailhead, form an Adopt-A-Site partnership with a group to do informal monitoring and education.

INDICATOR: SURFACE AND SUB-SURFACE DISTURBANCE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES.
Sub-surface disturbances include pit latrines, trash pits, dishing by stock animals, etc.

STANDARD: Damage will not increase 10% above level in original site recording.

METHODOLOGY: District Archaeologist will survey to protocol. Surface disturbances will be measured in square meters, and sub-surface disturbance will be measured in cm depth and square meters in area.

FORM #: Form #20, in Appendix W.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: Archaeologist will visit site and determine status of the site based on site potential and original site recording. Use the following general guidelines:

High Potential: High diversity of material types.
Multiple tools and tool types.
Presence of ground stone.
Midden site.

Moderate Potential: Lithic scatter.
Few material types.
Few tools and tool types.
No ground stone.

Low Potential: Sparse lithic scatter.

If site is considered high potential, take the following actions: place site into first priority for formal evaluation. In meantime, increase FS presence. If camping is occurring on the site, discourage use by removing fire ring and log seats, etc., and posting "no camping for resource protection" sign.

If site has moderate potential, take the following actions: consult Forest Archaeologist since this is not a clear-cut case. Based on FA's advice, take appropriate actions from those listed under "high potential," above. Continue to monitor up until the time of evaluation.

If site has low potential, take the following actions: continue to monitor; remove rock ring and log seats to discourage camping.

INDICATOR: HIGHLINING IN LOWER 2 METERS OF RIPARIAN VEGETATION.

STANDARD: Foliar density shall not be reduced below 50% in the lower 2 meters of the shrub layer.

METHODOLOGY: Surveys will be conducted by Wildlife Biologist or Wildlife Tech in riparian zones throughout the wilderness. Photo points may be used to estimate shrub density in areas where points are established. Target species for this indicator are willow flycatcher, furbearers, and mule deer (particularly fawning areas). A detailed methodology can be found in Appendix U.

FORM #: Form 17, in Appendix U.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED:

In all cases where vegetation has been reduced below the 50% standard in the lower 2 meters of riparian, continue to monitor those riparian areas for 3 consecutive years following the initial survey to evaluate the success of the actions. Add the dates of future monitoring to the WIS.

If recreation-caused and localized: close duplicate social trails leading to water and leave one acceptable trail, rehabilitate and "block" the portion of the site that is closest to riparian so camping activity takes place farther from sensitive area, install hitchrail at campsite if damage is localized (this action should be used very infrequently and with great discretion), close site to stock only or to all use and rehabilitate the area.

If recreation-caused and widespread: information dispersal such as brochure explaining wildlife concerns; encourage use of temporary hitchrails 100 feet from riparian; require 100 foot setbacks; require certain methods of stock confinement; reduce stock group size limit; require permits for overnight stock use; require permits for all overnight use; institute a quota system.

If caused by domestic livestock: If caused by cattle or sheep, work with Eastside Range Con regarding the specifics of the problem, such as location, extent, etc. Place actions in the permittees' Annual Operating Plan. For sheep, the actions could include herding the sheep more quickly through an area or avoiding affected areas for one or more seasons. For cattle, the actions could include requiring the permittee to herd cattle away from sensitive areas instead of leaving them to drift, decreasing AM's (animal months) by decreasing the number of cattle or length of their stay for one or more seasons, installing a temporary enclosure or drift fence to protect affected areas, or closing the wilderness portion of the Chipmunk Allotment for one or more seasons.

INDICATOR: VEGETATIVE COVER AND HEIGHT IN MEADOWS.

STANDARD: Cover shall not be reduced below 50% and/or height shall not be reduced below 5 inches.

METHODOLOGY: Wildlife biologist or tech will conduct ocular surveys in Picayune Valley and Big Springs, which are mule deer fawning areas, plus any areas where great grey owl is found (owl surveys are targetted for 1996). A detailed methodology can be found in Appendix U.

Condition and Trend transects and photo points in meadows may substitute for the formal methodology as long as the Wildlife Biologist can gain the necessary information.

FORM #: The Field Form is #15, and the Office Summary Form is #16. Both forms can be found in Appendix U.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED:

If caused by domestic livestock: the actions would be the same as those listed under "highlining in lower 2 meters of vegetation" but would apply to affected meadow areas.

If caused by recreation: most recreation activities and campsites take place along creeks, lakes and under forest cover. Very little takes place directly in meadows except recreational stock grazing; therefore, these actions focus on recreational stock.

Actions include: distribute information on the problem and strongly encourage stock users to carry in feed; temporarily close affected areas to stock use; limit length of time stock can stay in affected area; designate campsites for stock which are located away from affected areas; require carrying in feed (request the use of "weed-free feed), further limit group size for stock (could be area specific or wilderness-wide); institute a permit system for overnight stock, a quota for overnight stock use, or permanently close certain areas to stock use.

INDICATOR: NEST DISTURBANCE OF PEREGRINE FALCON, GREAT GREY OWL AND CALIFORNIA SPOTTED OWL.

STANDARD: Peregrine falcon: there will be no human disturbance (hiking, camping) within 1/2 mile of a peregrine falcon nest.

Great grey owl and spotted owl: there will be a minimum of disturbance to the nest site by recreationists, as determined by a wildlife biologist.

METHODOLOGY: There is no written methodology in the Wilderness Plan. The wildlife biologist or technician will survey for peregrine falcon, great grey owl, and California spotted owl (as scheduled in WIS) to establish presence. If peregrine falcon is present, biologist or technician will visit site twice a week in June and July to monitor human activity. It is possible that USFWS would become involved with this species in some way. If great grey owl and spotted owl are present, biologist will visit the nest site if it is near recreation areas and determine the potential impact of human activity on the birds based on the popularity of the area, proximity of a campsite to the nest, size of the campsite (and therefore potential for a large party to occupy the site), etc.

FORM #: None.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED:

Peregrine falcon: if present, post signs in the proximity of the nest site to prohibit entry. If signing and presence of FS personnel twice a week were not successful in keeping visitors 1/2 mile from the nest, increased presence would be necessary. FS would carefully explore the possibility of enlisting volunteers or students to help monitor and patrol the area. Protection would be provided for as long as the nest was occupied.

Great grey and spotted owls: If potential for disturbance exists, biologist will work with Wilderness Manager to determine appropriate actions, which could include temporarily closing site and posting with signs. If actions were taken to protect a nest, biologist should visit nest site annually to determine if birds returned to the nest and, if so, whether the same actions should be instituted each year to ensure protection.

INDICATOR: DOWNED LOG DENSITY NEAR GOSHAWK NEST SITE.

STANDARD: No less than 5 downed logs per acre. Logs should be at least 15 feet long with a DIB (diameter inside bark) of at least 15 inches at the small end.

METHODOLOGY: There is no formal methodology written for this indicator. Wildlife biologist or technician will survey for goshawk using

current protocol. If species is present AND if the general vicinity of the nest site has a moderate to high density of campsites, the wildlife technician will survey the area for downed logs. Before conducting survey, technician should consult with Wildlife Biologist and refer to methodology for "Snags per Acre" (in Appendix U), which can be adapted to this indicator.

FORM #: None. Surveyor should record field notes and forward to Wildlife Biologist and Wilderness Manager.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: provide signing, increase wilderness ranger contact, prohibit firewood collection in the area, prohibit campfires in the area.

INDICATOR: SNAGS PER ACRE IN SOHA (Spotted Owl Habitat Area) CONIFER STANDS.

STANDARD: There will be an average of no less than 8 snags per acre OR no less than 20 square feet of basal area of snags per acre.

METHODOLOGY: Wildlife biologist or tech technician will perform survey if the following two circumstances exist:

1. Impact Indices for campsites in the vicinity of Diamond Crossing (location of SOHA) are being approached or exceeded (as determined by Truckee Recreation Assistant and/or Foresthill Resources Officer when evaluating Forms #1 and 2 every 5 years)

and

2. There is increasing evidence of recreational use that would affect downed logs. This would include evidence such as stumps that have been sawed, very large campfire rings, stacks of firewood consisting of large diameter logs, and use of saws (such as constructed benches and tables).

A detailed methodology can be found in Appendix U.

FORM #: Form # 19, in Appendix U.

ACTIONS TO TAKE IF STANDARD IS EXCEEDED: provide signing, increase wilderness ranger contact, prohibit firewood collection in the area, prohibit campfires in the area.

CHAPTER 4

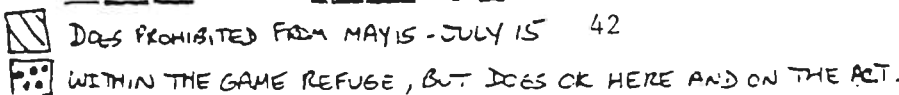
SPECIFIC DIRECTION

WHISKEY CREEK CABINS
Specific Direction

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Forest Service and the North American Basque Organization/University of Nevada at Reno Basque Studies Program is contained in Appendix C. This MOU specifies the conditions and terms of agreement for stabilizing and monitoring the Whiskey Creek structures.

If the MOU is no longer operable, the Whiskey Creek cabins will be allowed to deteriorate naturally, beginning after HAER (Historic American Engineering Record) documentation is performed.

Deterioration would be monitored and managed for public safety. This would include removing any portion of a structure as it became a safety hazard. As the metal roof collapsed or was purposely disassembled because of the imminent possibility of collapse, the metal components would be removed from the wilderness. Any wooden components would be left to decompose naturally.



DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK GRAZING
Specific Direction

The following information is to be carried forward from the Wilderness Act, LMP and the Granite Chief EA into Allotment Management Plans:

Congressional Grazing Guidelines for Wilderness state:

"...There shall be no curtailment of grazing in wilderness areas simply because an area is, or has been designated as wilderness, nor should wilderness designations be used as an excuse by administrators to slowly "phase out" grazing. Any adjustments in the numbers of livestock permitted to graze in wilderness areas should be made as a result of revisions in the normal grazing and land management planning and policy setting process, giving consideration to legal mandates, range conditions, and the protection of the range resource from deterioration."

The normal process for revising grazing guidelines is the Allotment Management Plan (AMP). An update of the Sierra Crest Sheep AMP is tentatively scheduled for 1995. The Chipmunk Cattle AMP was updated fairly recently (1983) and therefore the priority for scheduling a future Chipmunk AMP update will be toward the end of this planning period, unless circumstances develop that would create a need to change the priority.

Continue domestic livestock grazing in the Granite Chief, as permitted by Term Grazing Permits at the time of the enactment of the Wilderness Act. Manage all activities, including livestock, to minimize conflicts with wilderness and maintain resources to the established standards. Do not allow mechanized or motorized equipment for access or range improvement, as this practice did not occur prior to the area's designation as wilderness and was not established by prior agreement. Approve new structural improvements only if they are necessary for resource (range or other) protection and effective management of these resources. None are anticipated at this time. Use native materials for construction to the extent practicable.

Utilize the range resources in a manner that is compatible with wilderness resources, including solitude and aesthetics. When conflicts arise between grazing and recreation along trail corridors and in lake basins, resolve the conflict in favor of recreation. At this time, such action includes: no grazing, watering, or bedding in the Five Lakes or Little Needle Lake areas. Permit occasional watering at Mildred Lakes, but no bedding within 1/4 mile. At Diamond Crossing and Whiskey Creek, prohibit grazing and bedding, but allow sheep to pass through the areas. Require sheep bands to cross trails at right angles.

Permit seeding in areas where human activities, including their livestock, have caused the loss or threatened the existence of indigenous plant species or have denuded or caused soil loss, providing the activities responsible for the deterioration no longer exist and natural revegetation is insufficient. Use indigenous or naturalized species.

The Chipmunk Cattle Allotment Plan states that "as conditions allow, permit cattle to drift in upper Picayune Valley (a portion of the Sierra Crest Sheep Allotment) after September 1 for gathering purposes." Prior to Amendment #2, the Forest Plan stated that "There is a need to reconsider the grazing management in [upper Picayune Valley]." This statement was clarified in the EA and Decision Notice, as follows, to disclose the original intent:

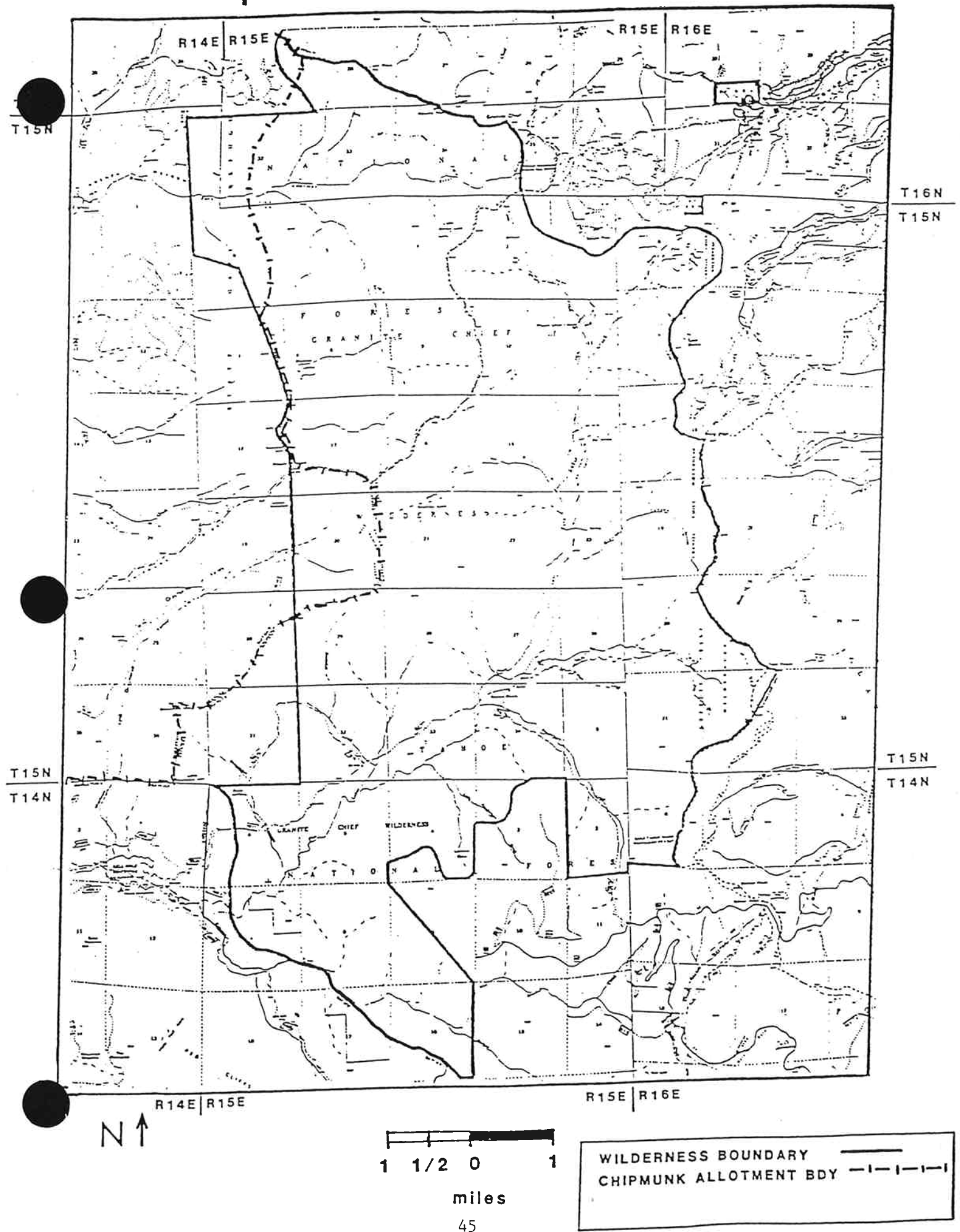
Cattle use in the upper Picayune Valley portion of the Sierra Crest sheep allotment by the Chipmunk allotment (1992) permittee will be discontinued. This will be accomplished no later than the planned Chipmunk AMP revision, currently scheduled for the year 2000, or with change of permittees, whichever is sooner. (Upper Picayune Valley is defined as that part of the valley above the distinctive waterfall which divides the valley roughly in half.)

Incorporate the following restrictions, as stated in the Forest Plan, in the Chipmunk AMP for the current cattle use in upper Picayune Valley: authorize only if amount and trend of forage is acceptable, stock only by natural drift, do not permit salting, and limit numbers to a maximum of forty head regardless of forage available.

The Sierra Crest AMP states its objective as an "...intensive grazing system..." Forest Plan Practice D2 calls for extensive management in the wilderness. To comply with the Forest Plan, apply an extensive grazing system to manage the wilderness portion of the Sierra Crest Allotment.

This range resource direction specific to the wilderness will be carried forward into future Allotment Management Plan updates.

Chipmunk Allotment Boundary



FIRE MANAGEMENT
Specific Direction

Currently, all wildfires are suppressed in the Granite Chief. The Lightning Plan for the Tahoe National Forest provides guidance for suppressing wilderness fires, including "light hand" tactics. In fiscal year 94, a Fire Management Action Plan will be written for the Granite Chief to specifically address wilderness fire suppression. This type of plan addresses only suppression and will ensure that all aspects of fire fighting are performed with a minimum of impact on the Granite Chief.

Also during 1994, the Tahoe National Forest will decide whether to pursue a Prescribed Natural Fire Plan for the Granite Chief. Such a plan would allow some fires, under very specific and controlled conditions, to burn in order to return some parts of the Granite Chief to more natural conditions. Until the time a Prescribed Natural Fire Plan is written, if ever, all fires must continue to be suppressed and management fires cannot be used in the wilderness.

Until completion of the Fire Management Action Plan (Suppression Plan) in 1994, Practice #P6 in the Forest Plan will provide guidance for selecting the appropriate form of suppression to take in the wilderness.

Clarification of LMP Practice #P6:

As discussed with Kathy Murphy, Bill Baker, and Patti Hiram, Practice P6 is clarified here as follows:

Replace current wording starting with "Confine: Unplanned Ignitions..." through the wording "...developed and approved." with the following:

Confine: The confine suppression strategy may be approved and extended for unplanned ignitions as long as analysis (in the form of an approved Prescribed Natural Fire Plan) indicates that resource and management objectives can be met and guidelines have been developed and approved."

At some point in the future, when the Forest is doing amendment of LMP Standards, Guides and Practices, we can amend P6 with the above clarifications (per conversation with Bill Baker). Until then, the existing language will suffice as long as a management understands that Confine is a suppression strategy and that "Unplanned Ignitions" is not considered a suppression strategy but rather is a type of fire that may be managed using the Confine strategy. Formally changing the text under P6 is considered an amendment and requires NEPA documentation, even if only to clarify the intent of the Practice. If managers agree on the intent of P6 and are comfortable with the existing wording, then an amendment is not necessary.

Fire Management Action Plan

To be completed Fiscal Year 94. Insert here when complete.

Prescribed Natural Fire Plan

If the decision is to have a Prescribed Natural Fire (PNF) plan, insert a copy of the plan here.

TRAILS, TRAILHEADS and ROAD MANAGEMENT
Specific Direction

Trail Maintenance Levels from the Granite Chief EA:

Trail Name	Approx Miles	Maintenance Level
Five Lakes Trail	3.0	2
Pacific Crest Trl	10.0	3
Buckskin Trail	1.5	1
Hellhole Trail	4.0	2
All Other Current Trails	13.5	3
Little Needle Lake (social trl)	0.8	1
Granite Chief Peak Trail (proposed)	1.0	2
Five Lakes Outlet Trail (proposed)	1/3	2

DEFINITION OF TRAIL MAINTENANCE LEVELS

Level 1. Drainage maintenance.

Level 2. All Level 1 actions plus:

Removal of downed logs that obstruct traffic.

Loose rock removal in flat areas (to discourage development of multiple trails).

Minimal brushing and tread maintenance (sufficient only to keep trail open).

Level 3. All Level 2 actions plus:

Removal of all downed logs

Loose rock removal on entire trail

Tread maintenance

Brush removal

Level 4. All Level 3 actions plus:

Routine hazard tree removal

Level 5. All Level 4 actions plus:

Backslope grooming

All levels of trail maintenance would include removal of trees that were serious hazards to public safety and removal of obstructions that would be likely to cause multiple trails or trail widening.

Old broken signs and signposts

During the summer of 1993, the wilderness rangers noticed that a short distance from almost every trail intersection in the GCW, someone had discarded old signs and signposts over the years. This debris should be removed from the wilderness. Though not generally visible from the trail intersections, the debris can be readily seen if someone wanders a short distance from the trail intersection.

Signs on Five Lakes trail regarding trespassing on private property

The Five Lakes trail crosses private property owned by Troy Caldwell of Alpine Meadows. Troy is concerned about the number of Five Lakes hikers who leave the trail and descend through his property, often walking right next to his house. In 1991, Troy talked to us about the problem and we agreed to put up a sign or two along the Five Lakes trail that says something like:

This trail is on private property. Please respect the rights of the property owner by staying on the trail.

In Feb, 1992, Linda N sent a note to Troy with this suggested wording and said we'd call him when we're ready to install the signs to see where he thinks they'd be most effective on the trail (i.e.; where hikers are leaving the trail to descend through his property). I suggested that he could give us a verbal description over the phone or hike up the trail with us and show us the best locations to install the signs.

Road Standards for West Side Wilderness Access

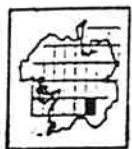
As stated on Page II-8 of the Granite Chief EA:

In order to maintain the desired Wilderness Opportunity Levels, recommend during project planning in the French and Wabena/Steamboat Management Areas that the roads leading to trailheads on the west side of the wilderness be managed as follows:

Maintain the road from French Meadows Reservoir to the Talbot Trailhead at the present standard.

Develop a mutual understanding and agreement with private landowners for a road standard for the Grayhorse Valley and Steamboat roads which does not improve accessibility. The goal would be to maintain the present standard of development, which is essentially describable as Travel Service Level "D." Forest Service Handbook 7709.56 describes road surface characteristics of a Level "D" road as "Rough and irregular. Travel with low clearance vehicles is difficult. Stable during dry conditions."

Maintain the French Meadows road between the Soda Springs road and the Tevis Cup trail at its present condition.



1986
539-1C

[illegible]

--- EXISTING TENNIS COURT TRAIL
+++ NEW SECTIONS OF TENNIS COURT TRAIL
----- COMBINATION TO RE-SURFACE & REHABILITATE

CAMPSITE MANAGEMENT
Specific Direction

Action Plan for Campsite Closure and "Catch-Up" Re-Inventory for 1994

Listed here are campsites which should be closed or re-inventoried in 1994. Sites that are listed here for re-inventory are ones that should have been re-inventoried in the 5-year block between 1989-1993 but weren't. They should be inventoried as soon as possible at the beginning of the season before they get used. This list does NOT include sites that need to be inventoried in 1994 as part of the 5 year period from 1994-1998. Refer to the WIS for a list of those sites.

Diamond Crossing

- DC-23 needs reinventory in 94
- DC-24 (on PCT near Twin Pks). Close
- DC-27 (old cabin site) needs to be closed and rehab'd
- DC-29 (newly found) Has not been inventoried yet. Hunter camp below confluence of Powderhorn Ck and Five Lakes Ck, on west side of FL Creek. Not sure if it gets used still. If it has evidence of recent use, do not close. Make effort to go in during hunting season and contact hunters. If site is really trashed, work with them in same way as Shanks hunters to improve conditions at their camp.

Whiskey Creek

- WC-3 Watch the vegetation in the vicinity of the cabins. Do some revegetation if necessary. Use grasses, which are easy to transplant and are also the indigenous plant. Take plugs from the nearby vicinity. Refer to the folder on restoration and revegetation in the wilderness file cabinet for specific information on restoration.

WC-4 Same as above.

South of Whiskey to Big Springs and Loop

- SC-10. Need to close

Shanks Cove and Trail

- SC-14 New site. At spot where trail first crosses Shanks Ck. Needs inventory.

Miscellaneous Campsites

- DC-10 On Hellhole trail at junction of Buckskin Trl. Close and rehab.
- DC-22. On Pacific Crest Trl by Twin Pks. Needs Re-inventory
- DC-24. On PCT by Twin Pks. Need to close.

Little Needle Lake

- AR-2 Was closed once. Got recreated. Needs to be closed and seriously rehab'd to discourage use.

Upper Middle Fork American, near Squaw

AR-8 Needs more work dismantling fire ring.

Un-numbered site on Tevis Cup Trail, south of Lyon Peak (see following map and photo. Close and rehab this site.

Little American Valley

AR-16. Need to close in 94.

AR-23. Is overgrown and not used. No Barren core. Has 3 large flat rocks sticking up like tombstones on 3 sides of the fire ring. Need leverage (rock bar or shovel) to move these rocks. Once removed, the site will look completely natural. Needs no other rehab work.

Picayune Valley and Lower Middle Fork American

All sites need to be re-inventoried except the two that Phil did in 1993.

Mildred Lakes

No survey has ever been done. There are one or 2 sites there. Need to survey one or both, depending on how many you decide to keep. Do not keep more than 2.

Western States Trail West of Whiskey Creek

WC-18. Newly found site. Need to inventory. "Osborn" camp. Might need to find it during or after hunting season when horse traffic beats a path to it.

New Campsites to Closely Observe

There is a new site at the north end of the Big Springs loop, northeast of Site SC-15. Keep an eye on this new site AND SC-15. Both are new in the last couple of years. The un-numbered one is receiving horse use (stock tied to trees, bare ground in a heavily vegetated area, etc.) You might consider closing site 15 and keeping this new site in its place because 15 is so close to the trail. However, 15 is a lazy-man's site and will probably get recreated because it is in an "obvious" campspot.

The unnumbered site may have been created because, during hunting season 1993, the two biggest horse sites, McBride camp (SC-8) and the SC-6 at the confluence of Big Springs Ck and Five Lakes Ck, were both occupied. Also, there is no longer any camping allowed at the Whiskey Cabins, so more horse use may be shifting to Big Springs. It's hard to say. During hunting season, the Esteves group has traditionally camped at the Whiskey cabins, so no other groups have the tradition of camping there during opening week.

Some of the horse users to the Big Springs area may be relatively new; that is, not have a tradition of using the GCW. However, the folks who used this new, unnumbered site told the ranger they have used the site for a couple of years and plan on doing so again. They could become regulars. The wilderness rangers should contact this group during hunting season and work with them on low impact stock techniques. Maybe get their address and put them on the mailing list.

WILDERNESS IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE
for the
GRANITE CHIEF WILDERNESS

ACTION	TIMING	WHO	FUNDING	COST
<u>WATERSHED/AIR</u>				
Meet with RO Watershed and Wilderness to discuss snow survey EA.	Winter 93/94	P. Brost TR Dist Ranger TRD Rec Officer TRD Rec Asst.	NFWM	
Initial measure of clarity at Five Lakes using Secchi disk	summer 93	Zn Fisheries	NFSO	
Evaluate success of social trail management and campsite restoration at Five Lakes, and set future clarity monitoring based on this (every 5 yrs for low success, every 10 for high). Enter future monitoring schedule into WIS.	summer 1998	Zone Hydro TRD Rec Asst	NFSO	
Initial Macroinvertebrate sampling in Picayune and control area Cost if using lab in Provo UT: 2 sites X 3 stations (\$35 each) X 3 times/year = \$630 lab costs.	summer 94	SO Fish Bio FH Wildlife	NFSO NFSO	630 lab
Develop guidebook for wilderness rangers to use in identifying non-native plants	FY 1994 target	SO Botanist	NFVM	
Visual monitoring of riparian & streambank conditions at campsites (using Form 7 in Appdx N) and visual ID of non-native plants in riparian areas (Form 18, Appdx V). Perform concurrently with campsite re-inventories, scheduled as follows:	(see dates below)	TRD/FH W.rangers	NFWM for streambank assmt NFVM for non-natives	
Zones: Fv Lk outlet Whiskey Ck. proper Western Sts Tr-west of Whiskey	1994, 1999, 2004, etc.	TRD W.Ranger		
Zones: S. of Whiskey to Big Spgs Shanks Cove and Trail Misc. (PCT, etc)	1995, 2000, 2005	TRD W.Ranger		

Zones: Picayune and Lower Mid Fk. Mildred Lakes	1996,2001,2006	FH W.Ranger	
Zones: Upper Middle Fk Amer Little Needle Lk Little American Valley	1997,2002,2007	FH W.Ranger	
Zones: Diamond Crossing Bear Pen S.of Big Spgs to Diamond	1998,2003,2008	TRD W.Ranger	
Establish photo points in areas of <u>recreation and packstock</u> impacts. See Appdx S.	Summers 94,95	TRD & FH wild rangers and zone hydro	NFWM
Monitor the above photo points annually for 2 additional yrs after they have been established (Apdx S) For points estab'd in 1994..... For points estab'd in 1995.....	summers95 & 96 summers96 & 97	TRD and FH Wilderness Rangers	NFWM " "
Establish photo points in areas of <u>domestic</u> livestock impacts. See Appendix S.	summer 94,95	Eastside Rng Con	NFWM
Monitor the above photo points for 2 additional years after points have been established (Appdx S.) For points estab'd in 1994..... For points estab'd in 1995.....	Summers 95 & 96 Summers 96 & 97	TRD and FH Wilderness Rangers	NFWM " "
Evaluate <u>all</u> photos for res.damage and place them on a schedule for rephotographing (see methodology in Appendix S.) Enter future photo schedule on Form #13 and in WIS. If resource deterioration has occurred, take actions as specified for this indicator in Chap 3 of WMP. For points estab'd in 1994..... For points estab'd in 1995.....	(see dates below) Fall 1996 Fall 1997	Zone Hydro or SO soils, SO Range, TRD Rec Asst FH Sup.For.Tech	NFWM
Check Form #13 in Appendix S to see which, if any, photo points need to be re-photographed that summer.	annually each spring, starting in Spring 97	TRD Rec Asst FH Sup.For.Tech	NFWM

Monitor fecal bacteria at Crane camp in Shanks Cove to see if the low readings in 1993 are consistent for a second consecutive year. See methodology in Appdx R. 1993 Lab costs= \$5/sample X 8= \$40. Take one of the actions below, depending on results:	Fall 94	TRD W.Ranger	NFWM
-If avg in 1994 on Form 11 is above 50, or there have been changes in riparian impacts, sample next in.. Thereafter, sample according to the methodology in Appendix R.	Fall 95	Eval-TRD Rec Asst Monit-TRD W.Ranger	NFWM "
-If avg in 1994 on Form 11 is below 50 bacteria/100 ml, and there is no visual change in impacts to riparian, monitor next in..... Thereafter, sample according to the methodology in Appendix R.	Fall 97	Eval-TRD Rec Asst Monit-TRD W.Ranger	NFWM "

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Design Five Lakes trailhead interpretive sign on general Basque occupation. Procure sign. Install at the trailhead.	FY 1995	SO Graphics TRD Arch TRD Wild Ranger	NFCR
Monitor Whiskey Creek cabins for vandalism or other damage.	Annually until 97	volunteers from NABO	no cost
Assess damage and recommend mgmt actions if volunteers from North Amer Basque Organization report vandalism or other damage.	As needed	TRD Arch	NFCR
Make recommendation for further monitoring of Whiskey cabins	Fall 1997	TRD Arch	NFCR
Initial monitoring of existing sites to prioritize evaluation schedule and further monitoring.	Summer 94	TRD/FH Arch	NFCR
Monitor "Priority #1" sites (rock art, sites w/ planned mgmt activities, etc.)	annually until evaluated, starting 94	TRD/FH Arch	NFCR
Monitor Priority #2 sites (refer to monitoring plan for explanation of priorities)	annually 94 through 98	TRD/FH Arch	NFCR

2000/year (1000 for each Dist. Arch)

see above

Monitor sites that stay in Priority #2 every 3 years	summer 2001 summer 2004 summer 2007 etc	TRD/FH Arch " " "	NFCR " " "	see above
Monitor Priority #3 sites	Summer 94 Summer 95 Summer 96	TRD/FH Arch	NFCR	see above
Monitor sites that stay in Priority #3 every 2 years.	Summer 98 Summer 2000 Summer 2002 etc	TRD/FH Arch	NFCR	see above
Monitor Priority #4 sites	Summer 98 Summer 98 Summer 2000	TRD/FH Arch	NFCR	see above
Monitor sites that stay in Priority #4 every 3 years	Summer 2003 Summer 2006 Summer 2009 etc.	TRD/FH Arch	NFCR	see above

RANGE

Establish new range C&T transects on Sierra Crest allotment.	Summers 1993 and 1994	East Rng Con D.Behrens	NFVM	
Continued reading of the following Sierra Crest transects every 5 years:	see below	East Rng Con	NFVM	
-Old transects read in 91 by P. Fong.	Summer 1996 Summer 2001 Summer 2006, etc.			
-New transects estab'd in 93/94 by F.Kent and D.Behrens	Summer 1999 Summer 2004 Summer 2009, etc.			
Update Sierra Crest AMP. Refer to Chap 4 of WMP for wilderness- specific direction to carry forward	1995, per LMP	SO Range	NFVM	
Update Chipmunk AMP. Refer to Chap 4 of WMP for wilderness- specific direction to carry forward	2000, per LMP	SO Range FHNR	NFVM	
Establish new transects and read the Diamond and Whiskey transects for recreational packstock	Summer 93/94	East Rng Con	NFWM	
Continue reading recreational packstock transects at Diamond and Whiskey Creek.	Summer 1999 Summer 2004 Summer 2009, etc.	East Rng Con	NFWM	

Implement mgmt actions for pack-stock if C&T standards are exceeded.

Ongoing

TRD Rec Asst NFWM
FHNR

depends on conditions found during monitoring

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

Meet with CDF&G to discuss summer 1995 Five Lakes stocking.

Winter 94/95

SO Fish Bio NFIF
Zone Fish Bio
TRD Rec Assistant
FH Sup.Forest Tech

Monitor fish at Five Lakes (Gill netting to determine age structure of EBT and RBT population after stocking only with RBT for 3 years.)

1993

SO Fish Bio NFWM
Sone Fish Bio

Contact Wilderness Staff on Truckee and Foresthill Districts after receiving annual stocking plan from Fish and Game.

Annually in early spring

SO Fish Bio

Old Forest/Riparian/Mdw photo survey, ground truthing, mapping

1994 target

SO Ecologist NFTE
+ other benefitting?

Willow flycatcher -establish presence.

1994 target

FH Resources NFTE
or SO Wildlife

-If present, monitor the habitat for "Highlining in lower 2 Meters of riparian veg" using Form #17 in Appendix U.

1994

FH Resources or
Wildlife Tech NFTE

Monitor mule deer and furbearer riparian habitat in Picayune Val and Big Springs for highling in lower 2 meters of veg. Use Form #17 in Appendix U. At Big Spgs, use established photo pts for the info if possible. Otherwise use ocular surveys.

1994

Wildlife Tech NFTE

Evaluate Form #17 (for all spp) for adequate riparian density in lower 2 meters. If below the 50% standard, take actions from Chapter 3.

Fall 1994

SO Wildlife Bio NFTE
FHNR

Spotted owl - monitor SOHA every 5 years.

1996
2001
2006, etc.

Wildlife tech NFTE

Peregrine Falcon - establish presence on Needle Peak. If present, see indicator for "nest disturbance" in Chapter 3 of WMP for actions. Add these actions to WIS.	1994 target	FH Resources NFTE or SO Wildlife, FH W.Rngr if skilled	
Goshawk - establish presence in potential habitat (approx 600 acres). If present, see indicator for "nest disturbance" in Chapter 3 of WMP. Add any actions to WIS. This could include a survey for the indicator "downed log density near goshawk nest site" is nest is near mod-high recreation use zone.	1995 and 1996 (2 consec. yrs)	Wildlife tech NFTE SO Wildlife	1100 1100
Measure veg cover in meadows in Picayune Valley and Big Spgs for mule deer, using Form #15, Appdx U. Summarize field data onto Form #16, Appendix U.	Summer 95	Wildlife Tech NFTE	
Evaluate Form #16, Appdx U, for adequate veg cover in meadows for mule deer.	Fall 95	SO Wildlife Bio NFTE	
Great grey owl - survey to establish presence. -If present, monitor for the indicator "veg cover in meadows" using Form #15. Summarize field data on Form #16, Appdx U.	1995 target	Wildlife tech NFTE	1100
	Summer 96, or 1 year after GGO survey	Wildlife tech NFTE	
Evaluate Form #16 for adequate cover for great grey owl.	Fall 1996, or 1 year after GGO survey.		

FIRE MANAGEMENT

Meet to discuss feasibility of doing PNF plan. If decision is to do PNF plan, add all necessary actions to WIS.	Jan 94	SO & District wilderness & fire staff	FFFP and benefitting functions
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RECREATION

Rehabilitate campsites (refer to Chapter 4, "campsites.")	summer 1994	TRD W.Ranger FH W.Ranger	
Bradley Hut: take action according to appeals resolution. See Chapter 4 for technical information.	Dependent on resolution of appeals	TRD Rec Asst	NFWM

Build trail to alternate campsites below outlet of Five Lakes (after ARR and Decision Memo are done).	Summer 96	TRD Rec Asst	CNTR	
Map all social trails in Little Needle Lake, Mildred Lakes, and Five Lakes basins to record baseline. Enter all info onto Form #10, Appendix Q, in WMP.	Summer 94	FH W. Ranger TRD W. Ranger	NFWM	
Perform drainage on social trails around Five Lakes which will be kept open. Close and rehab unneeded & unacceptable trails. Enter changes and work performed onto Form #10, Appendix Q.	Summer 95 (same time that FL extension trail is built)	TRD Rec Asst	NFTR	
Visual monitoring for continued use of closed trails and deteriorating conditions on open trails in all lake basins, using Form #10 in Appendix Q.	1997 2000 2003 every 3 years	TRD W. Ranger FH W. Ranger	NFWM	
Review Form #10, Appdx Q, to determine if actions need to be taken, such as closing new social trails, rehabing trails, etc. Add any actions to WIS.	1997 2000 2003, every 3 yrs	TRD Rec Asst (for Five Lks) FH Sup. For. Tech (for Mildred & Little Needle)	NFWM NFWM	
Decision Memo for trail to top of Granite Chief Peak	Winter 93/94	TRD Rec Asst	NFWM	
Evaluate whether the Hunter Spg and Little Powderhorn trails have faded naturally into landscape. If not, take action to aid revegetation.	Summer 1996	TRD W. Ranger	NFWM	
Place "no stock within 600 feet" sign at Mildred and Little Needle Lakes.	Summer 94	FH W. Ranger	NFWM	
When Tevis Cup Trail is relocated, rehab a portion of the old "high route" and the trail from Little Am Val to the high route. See Chapter 4, "Trails" for restoration needs.	Timing depends on aquisition of private land & relocation of trail.	FH Eng Tech.	NFTR	18,000
When Tevis Cup Trail is relocated, grade a parking area for 2 to 3 vehicles (blade work only)	Timing depends on trail relocation (see above)	FH Eng. Tech	CNRN	2000

Remove painted arrows from rocks along the Western Sts & Tevis Cup trails.	1994	Cooperative agreement between FS & permittees	NFWM and coop money from permittees	
Evaluate success of natural revegetation on sections of old road in Sec 29 (west end Tevis Cup Trail.) Make recommendations for erosion control, seeding, or other restoration if necessary.	1998	FH Sup.For.Tech & FH Eng. Tech	NFWM	
Grade parking areas at Grayhorse trailhead to accommodate 2 to 3 vehicles (blade work and possibly 1-2 loads gravel).	FY 96, but depends on aquisation of easement.	FH Eng. Tech	CNRN	3500
Replace road signs in vicinity of French Mdws Reservoir to omit directions to wilderness.	early FY 94	FH Eng. Tech & NFRM FH Sup.For.Tech		
Remove all old broken and hidden signs and signposts at most trail intersections in the GCW. See Chapter 4, Trails, for details.	annually until completed	TRD/FH W.Rangers	NFWM	
Work with F&G to reach agreement re: signing the French Mdws Game Refuge boundary in a way that is more consistent with wilderness philosophy.	???	FH Sup.For.Tech	NFWM	
Amend Sierra Club's Special Use Permit for Bradley Hut to say "maximum of 12 people in a group"	Winter 94/95	D.Suarez	NFWM	
Annual Campsite Re-Inventory Schedule, using Form #7 in Appendix N. Each "set" of zones should be re-inventoried once every 5 years.	see dates below	TRD and FH W.Rangers	NFWM	
Zones: Fv Lk outlet Whiskey Ck. proper Western Sts Tr-west of Whiskey	1994,1999,2004, etc.	TRD W.Ranger	NFWM	
Zones: S.of Whiskey to Big Spgs Shanks Cove and Trail Misc. (PCT, etc)	1995,2000,2005	TRD W.Ranger	"	
Zones: Picayune and Lower Mid Fk. Mildred Lakes	1996,2001,2006	FH W.Ranger	"	

Zones: Upper Middle Fk Amer Little Needle Lk Little American Valley	1997,2002,2007	FH W.Ranger	"
Zones: Diamond Crossing Bear Pen S.of Big Spgs to Diamond	1998,2003,2008	TRD W.Ranger	"
"Catch up" on campsite reinventory using Form #7, Appendix N, for sites that did not get re-inventoried in the 89-93 time period. See details in Chapter 4 under Campsites. DC-22,DC-23,DC-29,SC-14,WC-18, All Mildred Lk sites and Picayune Valley sites (except AR-39 done in 93)	early summer in 1994	TRD and FH W.Rangers	
Order and install sign for 5 Lakes trail regarding trespassing on - privat property. See Chapter 4, "Trails," for details.	FY 94	TRD Rec Asst TR Wild Ranger	
Summarize campsite info from Form #7 onto Forms #1 and 2. See Appendix K.	Annually	TRD and FH W.Rangers	NFWM
Evaluate Form #1 If Bare Core exceeded, refer to Chapter 3 for that indicator.	Fall 1993, 1998, 2003,etc (every 4 yrs).	TRD Rec Asst & FH Sup.For.Tech	NFWM
Evaluate Form #2 If there are any campsites listed on this form, see Chapter 3 for the indicator "Impact Index."	same as above schedule for Form #1	TRD Rec Asst FH Sup.For.Tech	NFWM
Social monitoring in the field -Encounters while Traveling (Form #3) _Groups camped w/in Sight/Sound (Form #5)	annually	TRD/FH W.Rngr	NFWM
Summarize social monitoring data Compile Form #3 data to Forms #4a,b Compile Form #5 data to Form #6.	annually at end of each field season	TRD/FH W.Rangers	NFWM
Evaluate Form #4a. If standard is exceeded for any trail segment, refer to Chapter 3 for this indicator.	annually each fall	FH Sup.For.Tech	NFWM
Evaluate Form #4b. If standard is exceeded for any trail segment, refer to Chapter 3 for this indicator.	annually each fall	TRD Rec.Asst.	NFWM

Evaluate Form #6.

If standard is exceeded, refer to Chapter 3.

Annually each
fall

TRD Rec Asst NFWM
FH Sup.For.Tech

Evaluate and review Form #9, Campsite Work Summary to see which campsites need to have work performed that season or need other attention by W.Rangers.

annually each
spring

TRD Rec.Asst NFWM
FH Sup.For.Tech

Monitor use at Mildred Lake to establish use patterns, evaluate success of campsite rehab, to see if recreational stock are within 600 ft, and see if sheep are bedding there.

1995, 1996,
and longer if
problems exist.

FH W.Ranger NFWM

Implement the following actions for hunting camps in Shanks Cove. See Chapter 4, Hunting Camps, for details:

See dates below

TRD Rec Asst NFWM
& TRD W.Ranger

-Burlap Sacks. Contact both camps to see if they need us to drop off sacks at Alpine Stables for trash removal.

early Sept 94
early Sept 95
(longer if
trash not gone
by 1995)

TRD W.Ranger NFWM

-Trash. Eval whether all trash has been removed from both camps. If not, refer to Actions in Chap 4, Hunting Camps. Enter any actions into WIS.

Fall 1995

TRD Rec.Asst. NFWM

-Painted Rocks. Remove evidence of these rocks at Crane camp

Fall 1996
and longer if
needed.

TRD W.Ranger NFWM

-Developments. Start working on the developments at Crane Camp.

Fall 1995
and longer
if needed.

TRD W.Ranger NFWM

LIST OF APPENDICES

- A. - **FOREST PLAN DIRECTION**
 - Management Area 080 (Granite Chief), as amended, from Forest Plan.
 - Map of Chipmunk Cattle Allotment boundary
 - Management Area 83 (Wabena-Steamboat) and MA 89 (French), amended in EA process, addressing how roads and transportation could effect the GCW.
- B. - **CAMPSITE RESTORATION ARTICLES and information**
 - Willow planting instructions
- C. - **WHISKEY CREEK CABINS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).**
 - Actions to take if MOU is not longer operable.
- D. - **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**
 - GCW mailing list.
 - Directions for how to print mailing labels on laser printer.
- E. - **HUNTING CAMPS**
 - Correspondence with Crane and Bechdolt hunting camps.
 - Meeting notes.
 - Directions for finding Crane and Bechdolt camps
 - Map of willow planting that has been done at Crane camp.
- F. - **OUTFITTER/GUIDES**
 - Criteria for new Outfitter Guides in the wilderness, from the GCW EA.
 - Letters to prospective Outfitter/Guides explaining wilderness criteria.
- G. - **FOREST ORDERS**
 - Granite Chief Order
 - Pacific Crest Trail ("no bicycles") Order
 - Examples of other forests' orders that might be useful in the future.
- H. - **RANGE TRANSECTS**
 - Maps of the Condition and Trend Transects (C&T's)
- J. - **PRESS RELEASES**
 - Example of mountain bike press release
- K. - **CAMPSITE RE-INVENTORY, BARREN CORE, and IMPACT INDEX**
 - Form #1
 - Form #1 Instructions
 - Map of Short Camping Zones
 - Form #2 - Campsites Exceeding Impact Index
 - Form #2 Instructions
- L. - **NUMBER OF ENCOUNTERS PER DAY WHILE TRAVELING**
 - Methodology
 - Form #3 - Field Form for Number of Encounters Per Day While Traveling
 - Form #3 Instructions
 - Map of Trail Segments to use for this monitoring
 - Forms #4a and 4b - Office Summary Forms for Encounters While Traveling
 - Form #4a and b Instructions

- M. - NUMBER OF GROUPS CAMPED WITHIN SIGHT/SOUND OF YOUR CAMPSITE
 - Methodology
 - Form #5 - Field Form for Groups Camped Within Sight/Sound
 - Form #5 Instructions
 - Map of short camping zones to use for this indicator
 - Form #6 - Office Summary Form for Groups Camped within Sight/Sound
 - Form #6 Instructions
- N. - CAMPSITE IMPACT INVENTORY
 - Methodology
 - Form #7 - Campsite Impact Inventory Form
 - Map of large camping zones to use for this inventory
 - Illustrations of vegetation cover classes
- P. - CAMPSITE WORK SUMMARY
 - Form #9
 - Form #9 Instructions
 - Map of Short Camping Zones to use with this form
- Q. - SOCIAL TRAILS IN LAKE BASINS
 - Methodology for monitoring
 - Form #10 - Social Trails in the Lake Basins
 - Form #10 Instructions
- R. - FECAL STREP AND FECAL COLIFORM at Crane Camp
 - Methodology for monitoring
 - Form #11 - Fecal Strep and Coliform
 - Form #11 Instructions
 - Map of Crane Camp sampling points
 - Map of how to get to Crane Camp
 - Map of how to get to the lab in Reno
 - Sample of a lab slip and how to fill it out
 - Information on dilutions
 - Directions for finding Crane Camp
 - Photos of the sampling point locations at Crane Camp.
- S. - PHOTO POINTS IN RIPARIAN AREAS
 - Methodology
 - Form #12 - Field Form for Photo Points
 - Map of photo point locations, to be added in future when established.
 - Form #13 - Office Summary Form for Photo Points
 - Form #13 Instructions
- T. - CLARITY AT FIVE LAKES USING A SECCHI DISK
 - Methodology
 - Form #14 - Secchi Disk Monitoring at Five Lakes
 - Map of sample locations (deepest points) at Five Lakes
- U. - WILDLIFE MONITORING
 - VEGETATIVE COVER in Meadows
 - Methodology
 - Form #15 - Field Form for Vegetative Cover in Meadows
 - Illustrations of vegetative cover classes
 - Form #16 - Office Summary Form for Vegetative Cover in Meadows

- **HIGHLINING IN LOWER 2 METERS** of Riparian Vegetation
 - Methodology
 - Form #17 - Highlining in Lower 2 Meters of Vegetation
- **SNAGS PER ACRE** in SOHA Conifer Stands
 - Methodology
 - Form #19 - Snags per Acre
 - Map of Short Camping Zones
 - Maps (2) of Spotted Owl PAC's and SOHA's in the Granite Chief
- V. - NON-NATIVE PLANTS IN RIPARIAN ZONES**
 - Methodology
 - Form #18 - Non-native Plants in Riparian Zones
- W. - CULTURAL RESOURCES**
 - Form #20 - Cultural Resources Inventory Form (no methodology included)
- XYZ.- COMPUTER DISKS**
 - For printing monitoring forms on Mac
 - For printing newsletters with Granite Chief letterhead
 - For printing database of original campsite inventory of 1988/89

**DECISION NOTICE
and
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for
THE GRANITE CHIEF WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PLAN
and
NON-SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENT #2
TO THE
TAHOE NATIONAL FOREST LAND AND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**USDA, Forest Service
Tahoe National Forest and Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit**

**Truckee and Foresthill Ranger Districts
Placer County, California**

I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) addressing expected effects from each alternative of the proposed actions. The goal for this analysis is to analyze and determine how the Granite Chief Wilderness should be managed to meet the intent of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Granite Chief Wilderness EA document was prepared by an interdisciplinary team, and analyzes the following proposals: permit systems, closure of areas to camping, management of the Whiskey Creek cabins, closure and restoration of campsites, restrictions on recreational stock use (including group-size limits, grazing, method of tying, and areas closed to day or overnight use), trails and trailhead management, management of dogs, fish stocking, and fire management.

DECISION:

My first decision is to amend the Tahoe National Forest Land and Resources Management Plan (Forest Plan). My second decision is to implement Alternative F, entitled "Public and Forest Service Concerns" in the Granite Chief Wilderness Management Plan Environmental Assessment (EA). For ease of understanding, Alternative F will be discussed first in this document, and the amendments to the Forest Plan will be discussed later, under "Findings Required by Other Laws" beginning on page 10.

My decision to implement Alternative F is based upon an environmental analysis that is documented in this EA. Alternative F consists of the following actions:

1. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Manage the wilderness using the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) strategy; monitor wilderness conditions per the Wilderness Management Plan and implement management actions per the Wilderness Implementation Schedule as necessary to maintain those conditions.

2. WILDERNESS OPPORTUNITY LEVELS

Wilderness Opportunity Levels (WOL's) will change in the following areas as indicated: bring the Five Lakes basin to WOL III for resource conditions; bring the two hunting camps in Shanks Cove to WOL III and WOL IV within this planning period (with the eventual goal of WOL II for both); bring the Five Lakes Creek trail corridor between the Big Springs trail and Diamond Crossing to WOL II, and allow the Granite Chief Peak area to become WOL III due to the managerial presence required to manage the high numbers of day users.

3. DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Continue domestic livestock grazing in the Granite Chief, as permitted by Term Grazing Permits existing at the time of the enactment of the Wilderness Act. Manage all activities, including livestock, to minimize conflicts with wilderness and to maintain resources at the established standards.

When conflicts arise between grazing and recreation along trail corridors and in lake basins, resolve the conflict in favor of recreation.

Cattle use in the upper Picayune Valley portion of the Sierra Crest sheep allotment by the Chipmunk allotment (1992) permittee will be discontinued. This will be accomplished no later than the planned Chipmunk AMP revision, currently scheduled for the year 2000, or with change of permittees, whichever is sooner.

4. RECREATION

Prohibit camping within 600 feet of Five Lakes and within 250 feet of the Whiskey Creek cabins.

Close approximately 78 campsites throughout the wilderness.

Develop agreements with users of large hunters' camps to reduce resource damage and development to levels compatible with wilderness values.

Inventory range condition in areas frequently used by overnight recreational stock users. Encourage users to carry feed until range capacity can be determined. Encourage picketing and hobbling for short periods of time only (2-3 hours per day).

Encourage the practice of tying recreational packstock at least 100 feet from water and, where possible, from campsites.

Prohibit all recreational stock use within 600 feet of Five Lakes, Little Needle Lake, and Mildred Lakes, except to perform work where stock was determined to be the "minimum tool," such as the clean up of lake basins and removal of manmade and non-native materials. Allow stock to pass through the Five Lakes basin on the Five Lakes trail.

Limit recreational stock group size to 12 head of stock for day use and 8 head of stock for overnight use. Provide a hitchrail at Whiskey Creek to confine stock impacts to one location.

Prohibit dogs during deer fawning from May 15 to July 15 each year in the key fawning areas. These areas are defined as follows: the wilderness portion of the French Meadows Game Refuge (except for passage on the Pacific Crest Trail), the Big Springs trail, and the portion of Five Lakes Creek paralleling that trail.

Construct a new trail, approximately 1/2-mile long, along Five Lakes Creek below the outlet of Five Lakes to access campsites where camping will be permitted.

Provide graded parking at the Greyhorse and Tevis Cup trailhead (after relocation of the Tevis Cup trail) to accommodate 2-3 vehicles. Work towards obtaining the easement for the Greyhorse trailhead.

Reduce overall levels of trail maintenance, emphasizing the protection of resources while minimizing serious threats to public safety. Ease of travel and convenience would generally not be emphasized.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Explore the opportunity to develop an agreement with an appropriate partner to stabilize and maintain the Whiskey Creek cabins to prolong their historic value, keeping the cabins in a state of "arrested decay." Prolonging historic value is defined as retaining the existing historical character and condition of the structures and halting any process which may be affecting their character. Prolonging could include such actions as repairing the roof and replacing logs with dry rot. This partnership agreement will be pursued during the winter of 1992/93.

If an acceptable partner is not found, allow the cabins to deteriorate naturally while managing for public safety.

Conduct archaeological surveys, with an emphasis on travel corridors. Take action to mitigate unacceptable impacts to historic properties.

6. OUTFITTER/GUIDES

No new, commercial special-use permits will be allowed unless they are shown to be beneficial to the wilderness resource and are wilderness dependent. "Beneficial" is defined as teaching clients minimum-impact techniques and imparting wilderness values, including non-recreation values, such as wildlife habitat, ecological diversity, and scientific values.

Do not authorize any backpack-guide service at Little Needle Lake and Mildred Lakes.

Do not authorize any cross-country ski outfitter/guide to camp overnight in the Five Lakes basin.

7. FIRE MANAGEMENT

As part of the Fire Management Action Plan, identify situations in which fire will be allowed to play a more natural role, including natural ignitions and management ignitions. The plan will recognize that the

opportunity for utilizing natural ignitions would be limited due to the small size of the Granite Chief Wilderness. Additional considerations will include the proximity to the Class 1 airshed of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, the existing Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines designed to protect wildlife, watershed, etc., county constraints on air quality degradation, and the existence of private lands that border the wilderness.

Give consideration to public safety and the long-term recreational experience that visitors may have as a result of fire. Visitors may be subjected to short-term inconveniences such as trails being used as fire lines and popular camping areas being allowed to burn.

8. FISH STOCKING

Recommend to the California Department of Fish and Game that the current stocking of trout at Five Lakes be discontinued.

9. SNOW SURVEY COURSE

Within 10 years, move the snow survey course to a location outside of the wilderness after a new one is established and correlation is made between the two. Until removal, recommend that the snow course be accessed using non-motorized means.

The actions included in Alternative F will be incorporated into the Granite Chief Wilderness Management Plan (WMP). The WMP will include background information, monitoring methodologies, and a prioritized, detailed schedule of action items called the Wilderness Implementation Schedule. In general, most of the new restrictions will be in effect by the spring of 1993. Campsite rehabilitation will begin in the summer of 1993 and continue for 2 to 3 seasons until completed. Construction of the two new trails is dependent on funding and the completion of archaeological surveys. Monitoring for range condition, campsite impacts, and water quality impacts has already begun. Monitoring for most other resources will begin over the next 1-2 years; however, the Limits of Acceptable Change process provides the framework to modify the monitoring schedule in the future based on wilderness management needs, new research findings, and the suitability of chosen indicators.

The actions will occur on National Forest System lands within the Granite Chief Wilderness, located generally west of Lake Tahoe, 5 air miles west of Tahoe City, California, and 10 air miles southwest of Truckee, California. The boundaries of the Granite Chief lie within Township 14 North, Ranges 15 and 16 East, Township 15 North, Ranges 15 and 16 East, and Township 16 North, Range 15 East, Mt. Diablo Baseline and Meridian. The wilderness comprises all of Management Area 80 of the 1990 Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). Within Management Area 80 are portions of 4 sections of privately owned land, all on the border of the Wilderness, comprising 641 of the total 25,682 acres in the Granite Chief.

The Granite Chief Wilderness Environmental Assessment is tiered to the Final EIS of the Forest Plan.

REASONS:

Alternative F was selected over the No Action alternative because it better addresses issues and meets objectives. The No Action alternative would do little to resolve conflicts between recreational stock users and hikers; Alternative F will allow for stock use but will limit stock group size in the wilderness and prohibit stock entry into the lake basins. Resource damage in the lake basins would continue under the No Action alternative but will decrease under Alternative F because of the recreational stock restrictions and, at Five Lakes, all campsites and some of the social trails will be closed and rehabilitated.

The No Action alternative would allow the Whiskey Creek cabins to deteriorate naturally which would result in an eventual loss of the structures and the public's enjoyment of them. Assuming an appropriate partner could be found to perform stabilization, Alternative F will provide the public with the opportunity to personally experience the cabins and gain firsthand appreciation for their unique socio-cultural values.

Alternative F will protect water quality more than the No Action alternative by restricting recreational stock from the lake basins and limiting the number of stock per group throughout the wilderness. Alternative F will recommend to the Department of Fish and Game that it discontinue fish stocking at Five Lakes in an attempt to achieve more natural aquatic conditions than exist under the No Action alternative.

Alternative F will result in less impact to soils and vegetation than the No Action alternative by closing and rehabilitating campsites and trails that are either in sensitive areas or occur in excessive numbers. The No Action alternative would not close any campsites or social trails.

The No Action alternative would continue to suppress all fires in the wilderness, resulting in continued fuel buildup and increased chance of catastrophic fire. Alternative F will develop a Prescribed Natural Fire component of its Fire Management Action Plan which will, within constraints, allow lightning fires to assume a more natural ecological role in the wilderness, thereby decreasing the chance of catastrophic fire.

Alternative F was chosen over the other action alternatives because it best resolves issues and meets objectives while allowing for a variety of recreational opportunities and maintaining a high degree of resource protection.

Alternative F will not institute a permit system at this time. The self-registration permit considered in other alternatives would be ineffective in achieving one of the most important goals of a permit, which is relaying "leave-no-trace" messages. The traditional permit system was felt to be too restrictive and inconvenient for day users (who cause relatively little resource damage compared to overnight users) and too restrictive, at this time, to apply to all overnight users. The most damaging recreational activity in the wilderness is overnight camping with stock animals; therefore, Alternative F will approach problems with stock camping in other ways than a permit

system. This will allow backpackers the spontaneity and freedom of visiting the Granite Chief without having to obtain a permit.

By prohibiting camping within 600 feet of Five Lakes basin and not requiring a permit system, Alternative F will result in the greatest amount of resource protection while restricting the fewest number of visitors. (The relatively small number of campers are causing the vast majority of resource impacts at Five Lakes.) All other action alternatives are either more restrictive or achieve much less resource protection.

Alternative F's group size limit for day use of recreational stock, 12 animals, will accommodate the maximum group size for people, which is also 12. Other action alternatives were felt to be too restrictive, particularly because day riders cause much less resource damage than overnight stock users.

Alternative F will limit overnight stock use to 8 per group, which is a middle ground among the action alternatives and will allow accommodate a short trip (2-4 days) for a moderate number of people (6-8). Other action alternatives would either not allow for a reasonable number of people or would accommodate more horses or a much longer stay than has historically occurred in the Granite Chief and is necessary in such a small wilderness. Stock groups between 8 and 12 members who are interested in long trips on the Pacific Crest Trail would be able to easily pass through the entire wilderness in less than a day or camp along one of the sections of the Pacific Crest Trail that weaves outside of the wilderness boundary, thereby enabling them to select a campsite outside of the wilderness to accomodate their group size.

By prohibiting dogs in the key fawning areas between May 15 and July 15, Alternative F will protect newborn fawns while allowing visitors (without dogs) to enter the areas for hiking, riding, and camping.

By stabilizing the Whiskey Creek cabins in an agreement with a partner, Alternative F will provide the public, for years to come, with the experience of visiting the cabins firsthand. The other action alternatives would result in either immediate removal or eventual deterioration of the cabins and the public's enjoyment of them, or in a very complex and expensive restoration process to fully restore the cabins to their original condition.

Alternative F will prohibit recreational stock from within 600 feet of the lakes in the wilderness. Unlike some of the other action alternatives, this restriction will target the use that is causing most of the damage while leaving other uses, such as backpacking and day hiking, free from restriction.

Alternative F will comply equally or more so than the other action alternatives with the non-degradation principle; this principle states that management will seek to maintain or improve the conditions that existed in the wilderness at the time of designation, or bring below-standard conditions, if they exist, to within acceptable levels.

SCOPING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:

A Wilderness mailing list was developed from the Forest Plan mailing list (individuals who specifically commented on the wilderness), trailhead notices, personal contacts, comment cards at trailheads, and news releases. Local, state, and national environmental and special interest groups were placed on the list. Also included were the California Department of Fish and Game, California Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan Region), and the State Historic Preservation Officer, all of which have legal jurisdiction over specific resources contained within the Granite Chief.

Four newsletters and 2 letters from the District Ranger were mailed to everyone on the mailing list, informing them of developments in the wilderness planning process and inviting comments and involvement. The trailhead comment cards also solicited input. Approximately 50 individuals who commented specifically on the Bradley Hut received an additional information sheet which explained the Forest Service's position on the hut and the intent of the Wilderness Act in addressing structures in wilderness.

The public was encouraged to comment in writing after each mailing. The Forest received 135 written comments from the 261 individuals and organizations on the mailing list. Appendix A of the EA contains a complete list of public comments and Forest Service responses. The Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities were developed from the comments received from the public, the concerns expressed by the Interdisciplinary Team, and those stated in the Forest Plan. The following issues drove the formation of the alternatives:

- * How should recreation use be managed at Five Lakes to minimize conflicts among users and to increase solitude?
- * Should the Granite Chief have a permit system?
- * How should trails and trailheads be managed to provide for solitude and wilderness access?
- * How should the Whiskey Creek cabins be managed?
- * How should campsites and overnight camping be managed to protect resources?
- * How should day use activities be managed to protect resources?
- * How should fire be managed?
- * How should recreation, dogs, and fire be managed to protect wildlife and provide habitat diversity?
- * Should fish stocking continue at Five Lakes?
- * How will water quality be protected?

Legal notice of the availability of the EA and this Decision Notice-Finding of No Significant Impact will appear in the legal section of the Grass Valley Union. Informational notices will appear in the legal section of the Sierra Sun and Tahoe World.

All individuals and organizations on the Granite Chief Wilderness project mailing list will receive a final wilderness newsletter concurrent with the release of the EA, notifying them of the Forest Supervisor's decision and informing them of the status of the appeal regulations. This Decision Notice-Finding of No Significant Impact will be distributed to those who have requested a copy of this document as well as those who have requested a copy of the EA. In addition, individuals on the Forest Plan mailing list will be notified that the Forest Plan is being amended.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

The alternatives were developed by the interdisciplinary team to respond to the issues developed through scoping. In addition to the proposed action, other alternatives considered were:

Alternative A - No Action

Continue current management, which would consist of the following: the level of Outfitter/Guide operations would be limited as specified in the Forest Plan, private inholdings would be acquired, and agreements would be developed with proponents of competitive events. Visitor use would be managed primarily through information dispersal at trailheads and occasional wilderness ranger contacts. No permit system would be initiated, and there would be no restrictions on camping or dogs.

All campsites would be retained, with approximately 8 heavily impacted sites brought within minimum wilderness standards. The Whiskey Creek cabins would be allowed to deteriorate naturally while managing for public safety. There would be no new trails, no trailhead improvement, and no action taken on social trails. There would be no restrictions on recreational stock use. The current fish stocking regime of 1000 fingerling brook trout every other year to the 3 largest lakes at Five Lakes would continue. Fires would continue to be suppressed under the Contain and Control suppression strategies outlined in Practice P6 of the Forest Plan.

Alternative B - Maximum Wilderness Protection

This alternative would achieve the most pristine conditions of any alternative. A traditional permit system would be instituted for all use, camping would be prohibited at Five Lakes and the Whiskey Creek cabin site, and dogs would be prohibited at Five Lakes and in key fawning areas during fawning season. Approximately 49 campsites would be closed, the Whiskey Creek cabins would be documented and removed, and trail maintenance would be reduced on most trails.

This alternative would also restrict recreational stock groups to 8 head for day use, 2 head for overnight use, and prohibit all stock within 600 feet of all lake basins. The Forest Service would recommend to the California

Department of Fish and Game that fish stocking be discontinued. When fires were permitted to burn, this alternative would give low consideration to the recreation experience .

Alternative C - Transitional with an Emphasis on Protection

This alternative would require traditional permits for overnight use and self-registration permits for day use. Camping would be prohibited at the Whiskey Creek cabins, 63 campsites would be closed, and dogs would be prohibited in key fawning areas during fawning season. Trails would be maintained at a slightly lower level than the present.

Recreational stock group size would be limited to 10 head for day use, 4 head for overnight use, and all stock would be prohibited within 600 feet of any lake basin. This alternative would recommend to the Department of Fish and Game to discontinue fish stocking, and would give moderate consideration to recreation when allowing fires to burn in the wilderness.

Alternative D - Maximize Solitude for a Maximum Number of Visitors

This alternative would seek to indirectly reduce numbers of visitors in overused areas and/or disperse visitors to less concentrated areas in order to provide an experience of solitude. A self-registration permit would be required for all use. Camping would be prohibited at the Whiskey Creek cabins, and the cabins would be stabilized to prolong their historic value. This alternative would close 51 campsites and prohibit dogs in key fawning areas during fawning season.

High-use trails would be maintained at a lower level than the present. One new trail would be constructed. Recreational stock would be limited to 8 head per group for day and overnight use. Stock would be prohibited from camping overnight within 600 feet of Five Lakes and Little Needle Lake, and prohibited entirely within 660 feet of Mildred Lakes. The Forest Service would recommend to the California Department of Fish and Game to discontinue stocking at Five Lakes, and if the existing fish did not reproduce, resume stocking with native rainbow or Lahontan cutthroat trout. When fires were allowed to burn, strong consideration would be given to the recreational experience.

Alternative E - Maximize Numbers of Visitors

This alternative would maximize visitors to the extent consistent with wilderness resources, values, and management principles. The Whiskey Creek cabins would be restored to their original condition, 33 campsite would be closed, and dogs would be required on leash in key fawning areas during fawning season. Trail maintenance levels would, overall, be higher than present. One new trail would be built and 2 social trails would be reconstructed into system trails.

Recreational stock group size would be limited to 12 head for day and overnight use. Stock would be prohibited from camping within 600 feet of Five Lakes, restricted to camping in designated sites at Little Needle Lake, and completely prohibited within 600 feet of Mildred Lakes. The Forest Service would recommend to the California Department of Fish and Game to stock Five Lakes with native rainbow or Lahontan cutthroat trout. When fires were allowed to burn, strong consideration would be given to the recreation experience.

FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS:

TAHOE NATIONAL FOREST LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (FOREST PLAN)

All management practices and activities of Alternative F are consistent with the management direction, including standards and guidelines, in the Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended (as follows), for the Tahoe National Forest and its provisions, which were developed in accordance with the National Forest Management Act of 1976, 16 USC 1604(i) and 36 CFR 219.10(e).

Management Area (MA) 080-Granite Chief

Replace MA 080 (Forest Plan pages V-417 through V-425) with Exhibit A. The following explains the key components of the amendment as it applies to MA 080:

Slightly adjust the allocation of Wilderness Opportunity Levels among the trail corridors and camping destinations in the wilderness.

Explore the opportunity to develop an agreement with an appropriate partner to stabilize the Whiskey Creek cabins to prolong their historic value, keeping the cabins in a state of "arrested decay." Prolonging historic value is defined as retaining the existing historic character and condition of the structures and halting any process which may be affecting their character. If an acceptable partner cannot be found, allow the cabins to deteriorate naturally while managing for public safety.

Remove the following Standards and Guidelines from application in this MA:

3. Dispersed Recreation - Low Standard
4. OHV Motorized Use
6. OHV Trail Development
10. ROS - Semi-Primitive Motorized
11. ROS - Roaded Natural
12. ROS - Rural
13. ROS - Modern-Urban
34. Timber Program Administration
48. Water Uses and Needs (Consumptive)
52. Soil Resource Improvement Assessment
66. Electronic Sites
69. Facilities Maintenance and Development
70. Forest Highway Development
80. Fuels Management - Activity Fuels

Clarify the following Standard and Guideline as to its intent in this MA:

43. Cumulative Watershed Effects Analysis. This Standard would apply to Prescribed Natural Fire and not to timber operations.

Remove the following Practices from application in this MA:

- G1. Mineral Management - Locatables
- G2. Mineral Management - Locatable Withdrawals
- G3. Mineral Management - Leasables
- G4. Mineral Management - Leasable Withdrawals

Clarify the following Practices as to their intent in this MA:

A1. Nordic Cross-Country Skiing. This activity would not be actively "encouraged", but would be permitted throughout the Granite Chief.

D7. Range Improvement - Nonstructural. This would apply only for seeding with native or acceptable naturalized species, and would be for the purpose of enhancing wilderness values and not for the purpose of improving AUM's for livestock.

D8. Range Improvement - Structural. This would apply only for the purpose of improving distribution to protect wilderness values, not to increase AUM's for livestock.

Manage the Granite Chief Wilderness using the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) process in accordance with the Wilderness Management Plan. Review the Wilderness Management Plan in 10-15 years and update if appropriate.

Manage livestock to minimize conflicts with wilderness values and to maintain resources at the established standards. When conflicts arise between grazing and recreation along trail corridors and in lake basins, resolve the conflict to minimize the impact on recreation.

Continue to pursue development of a Fire Management Action Plan which maximizes the opportunity to allow fire to play its natural ecological role in the wilderness and contains appropriate suppression strategies.

Continue working with the California Department of Fish and Game to discontinue fish stocking at Five Lakes. In the meantime, encourage the use of the "minimum tool" to perform the stocking.

Prohibit any future guided backpack guide service from using Little Needle Lake and Mildred Lakes. Prohibit any future guided cross-country ski service from camping overnight in the Five Lakes basin.

Use the Limits of Acceptable Change process to develop indicators and standards for monitoring conditions in the wilderness. Monitoring schedules will be contained in the Wilderness Management Plan. Specifically, monitor wilderness range to determine range ecological condition and trend and to aid in allotment planning so that range condition is maintained at the desired standard. This standard is defined as: vegetation and soils will be in good condition or better, with a static to upward trend. The variability from the standard indicating further action is: condition and trend of soil and vegetation is in less than good condition or is in a declining trend. Permanent transects will be measured every 1 to 5 years using the current Region 5 methodology.

Update the Sierra Crest and Chipmunk Allotment Management Plans by the target dates of 1995 and 2000, respectively.

Within 10 years, move the snow measurement course to a location outside of the wilderness after a new one is established and correlation is made between the two. Recommend during this time that the snow course be accessed using non-motorized means.

Management Area (MA) 083-Wabena-Steamboat

Replace MA 083 (Forest Plan pages V-433 through V-435) with Exhibit B. The changes included in Exhibit B consist of the following:

To Section II (Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities) add: "Access to several Granite Chief Wilderness entry points includes use of transportation routes within this MA. Standards of road system development is a variable which may have an appreciable effect on public use in the wilderness and therefore the achievement of wilderness management objectives."

To Section VI (Proposed Resolution of Issues and Concerns) add: "Consider implications on wilderness use and objectives during the transportation planning process. From a wilderness perspective, it would be desirable to maintain the present standards of road development. The French Meadows road from Soda Springs to the Tevis Cup trail is currently recommended for high-clearance vehicles only. From French Meadows, access to the Tevis Cup trail is a private, low-standard logging road passable only to 4-wheel-drive vehicles. The Chipmunk Ridge road, accessing the Grayhorse and Buckskin trailheads, is native surface suitable for passenger vehicles. The Grayhorse road, which passes through numerous sections of private land, is subject to temporary installation of culverts to facilitate timber harvesting. High-clearance vehicles can often use the road without much difficulty; however, 4-wheel-drive vehicles are advised. The road continuing past the Grayhorse trailhead to the Buckskin trailhead provides access similar in standard to the Grayhorse road."

Management Area (MA) 089-French

Replace MA 089 (Forest Plan pages V-459 through V-461) with Exhibit C. The changes included in Exhibit C consist of the following:

To Section II (Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities) add: "Access to several Granite Chief Wilderness entry points includes use of transportation routes within this MA. Standards of road system development is a variable which may have an appreciable effect on public use in the wilderness and therefore the achievement of wilderness management objectives."

To Section VI (Proposed Resolution of Issues and Concerns) add: "Consider implications on wilderness use and objectives during the transportation planning process. From a wilderness perspective, it would be desirable to maintain the present standards of road development. The road leading from French Meadows Reservoir to Talbot trailhead is currently an improved gravel surface."

Forestwide Standard and Guideline #14

Replace Standard and Guideline #14 (Forest Plan pages V-22 through V-24) with Exhibit D. This Standard and Guideline describes four Wilderness Opportunity Levels (WOL's) in terms of the resource, social, and managerial settings found in each. The changes included in Exhibit D describe each WOL more

quantitatively and with more specificity than the current description. The only application of this Standard and Guideline is in wilderness.

Monitoring and Evaluation table

Replace the entry under section B (Wilderness) of the Forest Plan Monitoring table (page VI-7 of the Forest Plan) with Exhibit E. Exhibit E removes the reference to monitor for "Carrying Capacity" and replaces it with the reference to monitor the wilderness using the Limits of Acceptable Change process.

THE NATIONAL FOREST MANAGEMENT ACT

I find that the changes to the Forest Plan presented above are not significant, either singularly or collectively, under the National Forest Management Act (36 CFR 219.10 (f)), for the following reasons:

In review of Forest Service Manual 1922.51 items 1 through 4:

1. These actions do not significantly alter the multiple-use goals and objectives for long-term land and resource management. Collectively, utilizing these actions and the Limits of Acceptable Change planning strategy will offer better opportunities for understanding and managing the wilderness values of the Granite Chief.
2. There are no adjustments of management area boundaries. The adjustments of management prescriptions resulting from this on-site analysis are minor changes which help clarify the compatibility for these management practices to perpetuate an enduring resource of wilderness.
- 3 and 4. The removal of 14 Standards and Guidelines and 4 Practices from those applicable to management of the Granite Chief Wilderness will reduce confusion in applying the Standards and Guidelines. Clarifying the intent of Standard and Guideline 43 and Practices A1, D7, and D8 in Wilderness accomplishes this same goal. The minor modifications of forestwide Standard and Guideline #14 to describe each Wilderness Opportunity Level (WOL) in greater detail will allow managers to set appropriate standards to meet the desired settings.

In review of Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, chapter 5.32, items 3(a) through 3(d):

- a. Implementing the changes within the planning period will minimize the effects of existing impacts and prevent or minimize many possible future impacts.
- b. The changes apply to the entire Management Area 080; however, the individual changes actually affect very small portions of this MA. The changes for MA's 083 and 089 affect only a small portion of these two management areas.
- c. Although the full adoption of Alternative F will displace some non-wilderness-dependent recreation activities, the changes will have

little effect on the long-term production of goods and services projected by the Forest Plan.

d. The modified management prescriptions are only relevant to these specific management areas. Implementation of these changes to Management Area 080 (Granite Chief) is compatible with the desired future conditions for that management area. Modifications of Management Areas 083 (Wabena-Steamboat) and 089 (French) are advisory only.

In addition, I find that the management prescriptions of this project that involve vegetative manipulation of tree cover comply with the seven requirements found at CFR 219.27(b) by following the Forestwide standards and guidelines and the standards and guidelines for Management Area 080 (Granite Chief).

THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRESERVATION ACT

Alternative F complies fully with the Wilderness Act of 1964 by preserving the wilderness character of the area and providing primitive recreational opportunities and scenic, scientific, conservation, and historical uses. Alternative F does not allow for mechanized or motorized equipment, except as permitted by the Wilderness Act for purposes of human emergency and wildfire. The alternative is in agreement with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the California Department of Fish and Game, including the following:

- * "Manage the wilderness to benefit fish and wildlife in coordination with other users and values of the Tahoe National Forest."
- * "Recognize the Department as being primarily responsible for determining the means by which fish and wildlife shall be used beneficially and promulgating rules and regulations for their taking."

THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT

Portions of the Granite Chief Wilderness, including the Five Lakes area and the Pacific Crest Trail corridor, have received cultural resources surveys. Additional cultural resources inventories will be conducted during 1992 and 1993, beginning with high-use areas such as camping destinations and travel corridors. Cultural resource inventories will also be conducted prior to implementing any projects such as trail building, trail reconstruction, and campsite restoration.

Cultural resources known to exist within the Granite Chief, and those yet to be identified, will be protected from project effects by avoidance through project design. The State Historic Preservation Officer will be provided an opportunity to review any projects. A professional cultural resource specialist will monitor the condition of cultural resources during projects and following project completion. Cultural resources found throughout the wilderness will be monitored periodically according to a monitoring plan which will be included in the Wilderness Management Plan.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

In assessing the impacts, I have determined that the actions proposed under Alternative F for managing the Granite Chief Wilderness are not major federal actions, individually or cumulatively, and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. Specifically, this determination is based upon the following factors:

1. The proposed actions are expected to have little effect upon public health and safety. Prohibiting recreational stock from within 600 feet of all lakes, prohibiting camping with 600 feet of Five Lakes, and closing and rehabilitating campsites which occur too close to water would potentially improve water quality and, therefore, public health [see Environmental Consequences, Section E (Hydrology/Water Quality), Consequences Common to the Action Alternatives (pages IV-34 to 35) and Consequences of Alternative F (page IV-46)].
2. There are no unique historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wild or scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas in the vicinity that could be adversely affected. The Whiskey Creek cabins and other historic properties, including archaeological sites, will be protected [see Environmental Consequences, Section C (Recreation), Consequences Common to All Alternatives (pages IV-3 to 4) and Consequences of Alternative F (pages IV-20 to 21)]. Wetlands around Mildred Lakes will be protected by prohibiting recreational stock use within 600 feet of the lakes [see Environmental Consequences, Section E (Hydrology/Water Quality), Consequences Common to the Action Alternatives (page IV-35)]. There are no effects on the other resources because they are not present in the Granite Chief Wilderness.
3. Based on public participation, the effects on the quality of the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial. No highly controversial effects emerged during this planning process, including agency and public scoping [see Purpose And Need for Action, Section E (Public Involvement, pages I-11 through 16) and Appendix A (pages A-6 through 25)].
4. There are no known effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. The effects of managing the wilderness under Alternative F are within the bounds of normal wilderness management [see Environmental Consequences, Section B (Overall Wilderness Quality), Consequences Common to All Alternatives and All Action Alternatives (page IV-1), and Consequences of Alternative F (page IV-3)].
5. This action is not expected to establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent a decision in principle about future considerations. There is no precedent for future actions based on the decision to implement Alternative F.
6. My decision is not related to other actions which individually have insignificant effects, but that cumulatively have the potential to result in significant impacts upon the human environment. There are no effects

identified that would have significant cumulative effects on the wilderness.

7. There is no potential for adverse effects of the actions upon sites that are listed in, or eligible to be listed in, the National Register of Historic Places, or, could cause a loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources. See Environmental Consequences, Section C (Recreation), Consequences Common to All Alternatives (pages IV-3 to 4) and Consequences of Alternative F (pages IV-20 to 21).
8. There is no potential for the actions to adversely affect a species that is sensitive, listed, or is being evaluated for listing, as an endangered or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. There is no potential to affect threatened or endangered species or their habitat as a result of my decision (see Environmental Consequences, Section G (Wildlife), pages IV-48 through 52).
9. My decision will not threaten the violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment. For the National Wilderness Preservation Act, the California Wilderness Act, and the Clean Air Act, see Environmental Consequences, Section B (Overall Wilderness Quality), page IV-1. For the Clean Water Act, see Environmental Consequences, Section E (Hydrology/Water Quality), Consequences Common to All Action Alternatives, page IV-34. For the National Historic Preservation Act, see Environmental Consequences, Section C (Recreation), Consequences Common to All Alternatives), page IV-3. For the Endangered Species Act, see Environmental Consequences, Section G (Wildlife), pages IV-48 through 52.
10. My decision has no known effects to consumers, civil rights, minority groups, or women.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

Implementation of Alternative F will be no sooner than 7 days following the date the legal notice announcing this decision appears in the Grass Valley Union and information notices announcing this decision appear in the Sierra Sun and Tahoe World.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL:

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 217. Any written notice of appeal of this decision must be fully consistent with 36 CFR 217.9, "Content of a Notice of Appeal," including the reasons for appeal, and two (2) copies must be filed with: Ronald E. Stewart, Regional Forester, Reviewing Officer, 630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA, 94111, within 45 days of the date legal notice of this decision appeared in the Grass Valley Union or the date that informational notice of this decision

appeared in the Sierra Sun and Tahoe World. The Reviewing Officer is responsible for notifying and sending a copy of the appeal to the Deciding Officer.

As a minimum your notice of appeal must: include your name, address, and telephone number; identify this decision being appealed (include the title of this document, its date, and the name and title of the Forest Officer who signed it); specify that portion of the decision that you object to; state the reasons for objecting, including issues of fact, law, regulation, or policy; identify the specific change(s) in the decision that you seek.

Your appeal can be dismissed if the Notice of Appeal fails to meet the minimum requirements of 36 CFR 217.9 to such an extent that the Reviewing Officer lacks adequate information on which to base a decision.


CONTACT PERSON:

Fran Herbst, Recreation Assistant
Tahoe National Forest
Truckee Ranger District
10342 Highway 89 North
Truckee, CA, 96161
(916) 587-3558

The Environmental Assessment is available for public review at the Truckee District Office at the above address, and the Tahoe National Forest Supervisor's Office and the Foresthill District Office at the following addresses:

Tahoe National Forest, Supervisor's Office
631 Coyote Street
P.O. Box 6003
Nevada City, CA 95959-6003
(916) 265-4531

Foresthill Ranger District
22830 Auburn-Foresthill Road
Foresthill, CA 95631
(916) 367-2224


JOHN H. SKINNER
Forest Supervisor

11/27/92
Date