

Desolation Wilderness

Eldorado National Forest

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

Pacific Ranger District



Welcome to the Desolation Wilderness!

To protect fragile ecosystems, reduce visual and environmental impacts and help maintain healthy water sources, special regulations exist within Desolation Wilderness.

Things to Remember



Pursuant to 36 Code of Federal Regulations the following regulations apply within the Desolation Wilderness:

◆ A valid **wilderness permit** is required for entry into Desolation Wilderness, both for day use and overnight stays. Permits not only provide important recreation use data, they have also proven invaluable in search and rescue emergencies. 36CFR 261.57(a)

◆ The **zone quota system** in Desolation Wilderness requires that you predetermine the location of your first night's stay. Your wilderness permit will reflect your selection, and you must stay in your selected zone on the first night of your trip. The zone quota system protects popular destinations from overcrowding, which detracts from your primitive recreational experience. 36CFR 261.57(a)

◆ **Campfires** are prohibited throughout the Desolation Wilderness. Dead and downed wood is critical habitat for many alpine species in Desolation, and the decomposition of wood plays a critical role in the nutritive value of the soils in which high-altitude vegetation must survive. 36CFR 261.52(a)

◆ Leaving refuse, debris or **litter** is prohibited. Pack it in, Pack it out! Toilet paper must be buried or packed out. 36CFR 261.57(g)

◆ **Human waste** must be disposed of 200 feet or more from campsites, water sources or trails. Dig a hole at least 6" deep to bury human and canine waste. Digging animals will expose waste buried in shallow holes. 36CFR 261.57(g)

◆ **Maximum group size** is 12 persons, applicable to both day use and overnight visitors. 36CFR 261.58(f)

◆ **Washing** with soap in a stream, lake or other water source is prohibited. Insect repellents, sunscreens and soaps (even biodegradable soaps) all contaminate water sources. Please help protect aquatic life and drinking water quality by rinsing off contaminants before swimming and by washing cookware well away from water sources. 36CFR 261.11(c)

◆ **Damaging or removing** any natural feature in the wilderness is not allowed. Please leave wildflowers for all to enjoy, and avoid trampling delicate lakeshore vegetation. 36CFR 261.9 (a, b)

Recreational Stock Use



Hitching, tethering or hobbling a horse or other saddle or pack animal is prohibited within 200 feet of a water source or within 100 feet of a campsite, or in violation of posted instructions. 36CFR 261.58(aa)

Tying to Trees -- Do not tie stock directly to trees except for loading, unloading, or short rest breaks while traveling.

Group Size -- 2 animals per person, 12 per group. 36 CFR 261.58(s)

Feed -- Supplemental weed free feed or processed feed, such as alfalfa pellets or crimped oats must be carried and used.

Special Management Areas

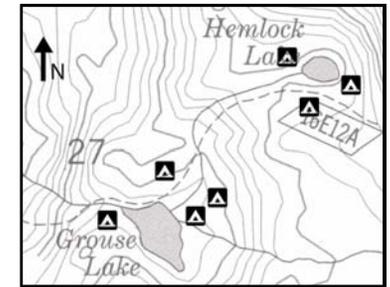
We need your help to protect fragile areas!

The popularity of some wilderness destinations results in damage to the delicate vegetation around shorelines and meadow areas. Restoration has occurred and campsites have been designated around several heavily impacted lakes to promote the re-vegetation and reduce impacts to these sensitive lakeshore environments. These maps illustrate the approximate locations of the designated sites.

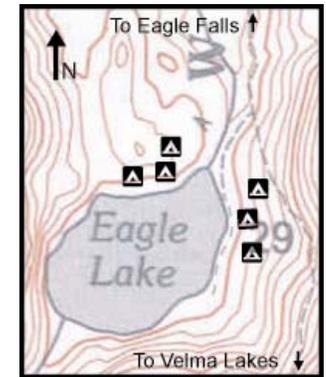
Specific campsites have been designated within 500 feet of Eagle, Grouse and Hemlock lakes, and the north and east side of Lake of the Woods. Designated campsites are marked with a 4 x 4 post with a tent symbol, and are first-come, first-served only. If all designated campsites are taken when you arrive, you must camp more than 500 feet from the lakeshore. 36CFR 261.58(e)



Lake of the Woods



Hemlock & Grouse Lakes



Eagle Lake

Bears



Black bears are active in areas near the Desolation Wilderness. As a result of the availability of improperly stored human food, greater numbers of bears remain active at higher elevations than in the past. Bears have extremely keen noses and are attracted to food smells as well as to the scents of personal products such as toothpaste and deodorant. Please remember that the forest is the bear's natural environment. Protect yourself by preventing the unnatural contact of bears with humans by using bear canisters for food storage, or by hanging your food using the counterbalancing method.

Drinking Water



Treat all water by boiling or filtering through a portable water filter. The microorganisms *Giardia lamblia* and *Cryptosporidia* may be found in even the most remote mountain lakes and streams, and cause intense gastrointestinal distress, including diarrhea and abdominal cramps. The organisms contaminate water sources through the fecal matter of infected mammals (including humans).

Dogs



Pet owners are responsible for the actions of their pets and for the proper disposal of dog waste. Dogs inside the wilderness must be under the immediate control of the owner. Dogs off-leash can threaten wildlife or present a hazard to the safety or convenience of other visitors.

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Desolation Wilderness Management Zones

