



INYO NATIONAL FOREST

Wilderness Areas

Trip Planning Guide



Listen to the wind blow through the branches on the trees...
Take a deep breath of clean mountain air...
Then put your pack on and hit the trail.

The Inyo National Forest manages over one million acres of federally-designated wilderness. With over 200,000 visitors each year, these areas are some of the most heavily used wilderness areas in the country.

As you plan your trip to these magnificent areas, remember that we must care for this precious resource in order to enjoy it.

USDA Forest Service
Inyo National Forest
351 Pacu Lane, Suite 200
Bishop, CA 93514



The USDA Forest Service is an equal opportunity service provider

Plan Your Trip and Accept the Wilderness Challenge



Taking your reservations in Bishop

Remember, successful trips don't just happen. They are the result of careful planning. Please use this trip planning guide to get started. However, we suggest that you also use guidebooks and maps that can be found in bookstores, local libraries, and outdoor equipment stores.

Find us on the web at:
www.fs.fed.us/r5/inyo

Before you call our friendly operators to make your wilderness reservation, you should decide what kind of experience you are seeking. There are some trails that are great for solitude, while others are known for great views or nice camping spots. Other areas are famous for great fishing opportunities. Remember, our operators do not plan your trip for you. Know what you want or are seeking before you make that call.

The Inyo National Forest Wilderness areas are only some of the many recreation alternatives on the Inyo National Forest. These areas allow a visitor to enjoy the wilderness and all that it has to offer. Wilderness recreation requires careful planning and preparation and involves some risk. Wilderness travel offers great personal freedom, but also requires self-reliance and good judgement. Permits are required for all overnight trips as well as day hiking to Mt Whitney. The visitor must have knowledge of the entry points and routes; some research may be needed to gather this information. These steps are necessary in order to protect these areas and to provide a quality wilderness experience.

Inyo National Forest Recreation Alternatives

If something other than a wilderness trip is more your style, consider one of the following recreation alternatives in other beautiful areas of the Inyo National Forest. There are many ways to experience the great outdoors; explore what is best for you.

Backcountry

There are a variety of options outside the wilderness that provide the same peace and tranquility. In backcountry areas, no permit is required, and there are more options regarding campfires and activities such as mountain bicycling and vehicle use.

Campgrounds

Many of our campgrounds provide running water, bathroom facilities, and access for people with disabilities. Pets are also welcome on leashes. On the internet, visit www.reserveusa.com or call 1-877-444-6777.

Commercial Resorts and Campgrounds

There are also a variety of resorts, campgrounds, and RV parks. Many of these accommodations have showers, electricity, and other amenities. See page 9 for more information about commercial organizations.

The Basics

Wilderness Permits

Wilderness permits are required year-round on the Inyo National Forest for all overnight trips into the Golden Trout, John Muir, Ansel Adams and Hoover Wildernesses. Day use wilderness permits are required only on the main Mt. Whitney Trail for hikes beyond Lone Pine Lake.

Trailhead Quotas

All trailheads within the John Muir and Ansel Adams Wildernesses have a quota: a limited number of people are allowed entry into the wilderness each day, per trailhead. For a listing of the quota levels see page 11. The quota period extends from May 1st through November 1st. Outside the quota period a permit is still required but you may self-issue a wilderness permit at ranger stations and visitor centers on the Inyo National Forest. In the Golden Trout and Hoover Wildernesses, there is a combination of quota and non-quota trails. Quota trails in the Golden Trout Wilderness are in effect the last Friday of June to September 15th.

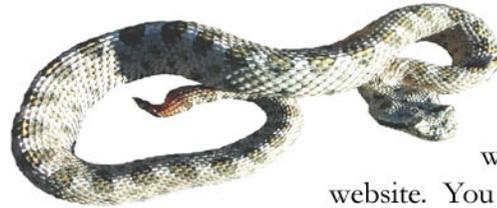
Fees

Fees are charged for reserving a wilderness permit only. If you pick up your permit the day of or day before your trip, it is considered a walk-in permit and there is no charge. There is no guarantee that quota space will be available on a walk in basis. If you want the guarantee, you must book a reservation for the permit.

The reservation fee is \$5.00 per person, except for trips that enter the Mt. Whitney Zone, where the fee is \$15.00 per person. Reservation fees are not refundable once your reservation is processed. If you are requesting to enter the Mt. Whitney Zone at any point during your trip you must apply the \$15.00 fee. Examples: A trip for 4 people entering Bishop Pass and exiting the main Mt. Whitney Trail (via Trail Crest) must be accompanied by a \$60.00 payment as the party is entering the Whitney Zone by exiting through Trail Crest. A permit request for hiking Onion Valley to Cottonwood Lakes and climbing Mt. Whitney in route would also be \$60.00 for a party of 4. Any overnight trip in the North Fork of Lone Pine Creek is in the Whitney Zone, which would include a \$15.00 per person fee.

Advanced Reservations

On the main Mt. Whitney Trail, 100% of the overnight and day hike quotas may be obtained through advanced reservations. Only trips beginning on the main Mt. Whitney Trail should apply for the Mt. Whitney Lottery (see page 5). For trips beginning on the North Fork of Lone Pine Creek (Mountaineer's route drainage) or starting on other trails, you do not need to enter the lottery, please follow the instructions below for all other trails. Applications for the main Mt. Whitney Lottery must be submitted to the wilderness permit office with a February postmark. The lottery process will begin February 15th so it is advantageous to submit your application early in the



month. After all lottery applications are processed, any remaining openings will be posted on the website. You can apply for these remaining openings by phone, fax, or mail beginning on the following dates: April 20 for trips starting in May or June, April 27 for trips starting in July, May 4 for trips starting in August, and May 11 for trips starting in September or later.

Changing your Reservation

If you need to change the entry date or entry trailhead of your confirmed reservation, and quota space is available, there is a flat processing fee of \$10.00. If space is available we can add party members to an existing reservation and the same per person fees apply. These changes can be made until 48 hours prior to your trip by phone, fax or mail. The phone number to call is (760) 873-2483. If you wish to change your trip entry or increase your group size less than 48 hours before your departure you must go to the ranger station to check for any available walk-in space.

Payment for Reservations

You can make your payment by credit card (Visa or MasterCard), check, or money order. If applying by fax or phone you must pay by credit card. All checks and money orders must be in US funds and made payable to: USDA Forest Service. Fees are due when the reservation is made.

Mt. Whitney Lottery

At 14,494 feet elevation, Mt. Whitney is the highest peak in the lower 48 states. Not surprisingly, it is also one of the most popular trails. The lottery system was re-established in 2000 to effectively handle the immense popularity of this route and increase the fairness of the permit system.

WHO SHOULD APPLY: Any hiker desiring to travel on the Mt. Whitney Trail from May 1st through November 1st. If you wish to climb the mountain outside of this period, you can self-issue a wilderness permit at any of our Ranger Stations. In addition, if you wish to access Mt. Whitney by entering from any other trail (i.e. Shepherd Pass, Kearsarge Pass, North Fork of Lone Pine Creek/ Mountaineer's Route, etc.) you do NOT apply for the lottery, you will instead request a reservation with a "Trail Crest" exit point, the exit point designated for Mt. Whitney. The six-month rolling application process applies to trips that begin with any other trails and end at Trail Crest.

RESERVATION CHARGE: For ANYONE entering the Whitney Zone, from any trailhead in the Inyo National Forest, a \$15.00 fee applies. This is a \$15.00 per person, per trip, reservation fee, regardless of the number of nights spent in the backcountry and is separate from any pre-trip campground reservation fees. To pay by check, you must mail your application with check enclosed, payable to: USDA Forest Service. Fax applications must pay by credit card (we accept ONLY Visa and MasterCard). If you are successful in getting a reservation from the lottery, a confirmation letter will be mailed to you with a receipt of payment and instructions for how to pick up your permit. If you are unsuccessful in your attempt to obtain a reservation, your application with credit card number or your mailed check will be returned to you within two months of the date submitted. You are only charged a reservation fee if you are successful with getting a reservation.

HOW TO APPLY: Applications for the lottery system must be mailed to the Wilderness Permit Office (see page 4) during the month of February. Select the Whitney Lottery Application under the "How to Obtain a Wilderness Permit" section of our website. We are also able to mail or fax copies of the application if web access is not readily available. Do NOT send duplicate applications or you may be double charged.

WHEN TO APPLY: Applications for the main Mt. Whitney Lottery must be submitted to the wilderness permit office with a February postmark. The lottery process will begin February 15th so it is advantageous to submit your application in the first half of the month. Applications received after February 15 will be added to the lottery at the end of that business day. After all lottery applications are processed any remaining openings will be posted on the website. These remaining openings may be applied for by phone, fax, or mail beginning on the following dates: third Wednesday in April for trips starting in May or June, fourth Wednesday in April for trips starting in July, first Wednesday in May for trips starting in August, and second Wednesday in May for trips starting in September or later.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS:

Although the lottery process is completely random, there are several ways you can help us to process your application. First, include as many alternate trip dates as you are able to in the appropriate section of the form. You may attach extra sheets with alternative dates that specify the entry and exit dates of your choosing. If you wish, for example, to hike Mt. Whitney at any time during the month of July, you may specify this on your application form if you tell us the length of your desired stay in the backcountry. For example, "I am willing to take any 2 night, 3 day trip on any weekend in July or August starting on a Friday." Also, it is a good idea to apply for a permit with a small group (4 or less people). You have a better chance of fitting into the quota for a particular day if you agree to travel with a small group of people. If you are willing to accept a smaller group size, let us know on your application. For example, under party size you could write: "15 but willing to accept a group size as small as 5." In the alternate leaders section of the permit, please include the names of up to three people who will be traveling with you. In the event that the permit holder is unable to participate in the hike, any of these people can legally carry the permit in place of the original group leader.

LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES

Plan your trip ahead and prepare

Be informed, accept responsibility for your actions and plan your logistics well.

- Know your skills and abilities
- Select and use proper gear
- Plan your meals
- Check at ranger stations for current conditions

Travel and camp on durable surfaces

- Travel on trails
- Recognize and camp on durable surfaces

Pack it in, pack it out

- Properly dispose of human waste, wastewater, and fish remains.
- Trash and leftover food should be packed out. Food should never be thrown into latrines, water, or woods. All these situations produce wildlife problems and leave campsites degraded.
- Dispose of fish remains well away from campsites, trails and portages.

Respect wildlife

- Be aware of the wildlife species around you
- Be aware of seasonal stresses on wildlife
 - Store food securely against bears
 - Do not put food in the tent

Leave what you find

- Don't damage vegetation
- Leave natural objects and cultural artifacts

Be considerate of other visitors

- Manage your pet
- Minimize overcrowding
- Let nature's sound prevail
- Avoid conflicts with other visitors

Minimize use and impact of fires

- Keep fires small
- Use established fire rings
- Use only dead and downed wood
- Check for any fire restrictions before entering the wilderness area.



Yosemite Toad

Before you Leave Home

Leave a trip itinerary with someone at home including:

- Trip leader's name
- Number of people in the party
- Make of car(s) and license plate number(s)
- Entry point and date
- Exit point and date
- Name of outfitter (if applicable)

The Forest Service does not automatically initiate searches if a group doesn't exit as planned. If someone is concerned because you are late returning from your trip, they should call the local Sheriff's office (see page 9).

The following acts are prohibited in wilderness:

- Camping overnight in the Wilderness, without a valid wilderness permit.
- Possessing or storing food, toiletries or refuse in a manner that allows bears or animals access to it.
- Storing or leaving unattended equipment, personal property or supplies for more than 24 hours.
- Camping within 100 feet of lakes, streams or trails; terrain permitting or less than 50 feet of lakes or streams or within 25 feet of trails.
- Washing and/or discharging soap waste within 100 feet of lakes or streams.
- Depositing bodily waste within 100 feet of lakes, streams, campsites or trails.
- Discharging a firearm, except for emergencies and the taking of game as permitted by California State law.
- Possessing or using any wheeled or mechanical device (bicycle, motorcycle, cart, etc.); some exceptions for persons requiring wheelchairs.
- Shortcutting a switchback on any forest trail.
- Entering or using the wilderness in a group larger than 15 persons or with more than 25 head of pack or saddle stock.
- Hitching, tethering or tying pack or saddle stock within 100 feet of lakes, streams, trails or campsites except while loading or unloading.
- Leaving any debris, garbage or refuse within the wilderness.

Smart and Safe Wilderness Travel

Water

Stream and lake water may look clear and pure, but if harmful organisms are present, drinking untreated water can cause illness. *Giardia lamblia* is a common water-borne parasite that can cause serious illness. It is debatable whether some wilderness areas have low or high levels of *Giardia lamblia*, and also whether many cases of Giardiasis are caused by drinking untreated water or rather from improper hygiene resulting in fecal/oral transmission of the organisms. It is every visitor's responsibility to make choices about water purification. If you choose to purify your water, either boiling for 3-5 minutes or filtering with commercially available hiker water filters is recommended.



Dehydration

The body becomes dehydrated when the rate of water loss exceeds the rate of water intake. It is very important that you drink plenty of water. One easy way to remember how much water to drink is to monitor intake over a day. 2 liters is good on normal days, and 3 liters is good on days full of exercise and sweat producing activity. Signs of dehydration include chapped lips, headache, cold and flu symptoms, and infrequent urination.

Hypothermia

The lowering of body temperature can be serious, even fatal. Early warning signs are uncontrolled shivering, slurred speech, bluish tinge to lips, lack of coordination, and poor concentration. Prevention is the best medicine; layer clothing and have adequate food and water. To warm a hypothermic person, seek shelter from the wind, replace any wet clothing, and share body heat if necessary. Give warm fluids if the person is conscious and have them rest until thoroughly warmed.

Serious Injury/Emergency

In the event of a serious injury or emergency, remember that the standard SOS call is a series of three signals of any kind. Mirrors and whistles are good examples of signaling devices. Avoid depending on cell phones, because coverage is usually quite limited in wilderness areas. When sending someone for help, make sure they have as much information as possible about the victim, the location, and nature of the injury/emergency. It is a good idea to send the message with two different groups to ensure that it is delivered.

First Aid

Carry a first aid kit and know how to use it. Each permitted group should carry a well stocked first aid kit and have group members that know how to provide first aid.

Weather

Weather conditions can change quickly. Always dress in layers to facilitate continual adjustments. Also, try to be proactive in your body temperature regulation: remove a layer BEFORE you begin to sweat. Add a layer BEFORE you begin to shiver.

Travel

Remember that in the wilderness you are on your own without written signs to guide you. A compass and accurate, updated maps are essential. Maps can be purchased from the Forest Service, area outfitters, or map companies. Keep your map in front of you and refer to it often. If you get lost, don't panic. Sit down, relax, and think. Chances are you will figure out where you went wrong and how to get back on course in a few minutes. If you are bringing a GPS (Global Positioning System) unit on your trip, make sure to also bring a map and compass in case your unit breaks.

The great sense of personal freedom enjoyed in the wilderness depends on a capacity for personal responsibility.

Food Canisters



In some areas, wilderness visitors are required to keep food and all scented items in bear-resistant canisters. With forethought and planning, it's amazing how much food you can fit into a canister. If you choose the right foods and repackage them, you can maximize canister space. It takes a little time and effort but the results are rewarding. Remember, when you are using a canister, all scented items (food, toiletries, and garbage) must fit inside the canister throughout your entire trip unless you are in attendance or actively preparing your food.



Put the canister and your kitchen around 50 feet away from your sleeping area. Leave the canister on the ground. Do not hang canister from a tree. To fit more into canisters, repackage food into baggies or small containers.

Stream Crossings

Spring run-off of the snow pack and /or midsummer rains can result in swollen streams and creeks, making it a challenge to cross them. Be aware of your choices when crossing streams. Look for the best place to cross given your skills and abilities. Logs and rocks can be slick, slippery or unstable. You may need to get your feet wet to make the safest crossing. Always unbuckle your pack's waist belt when fording a stream. To help yourself across, enlist the help of a buddy or use some kind of stick or pole.

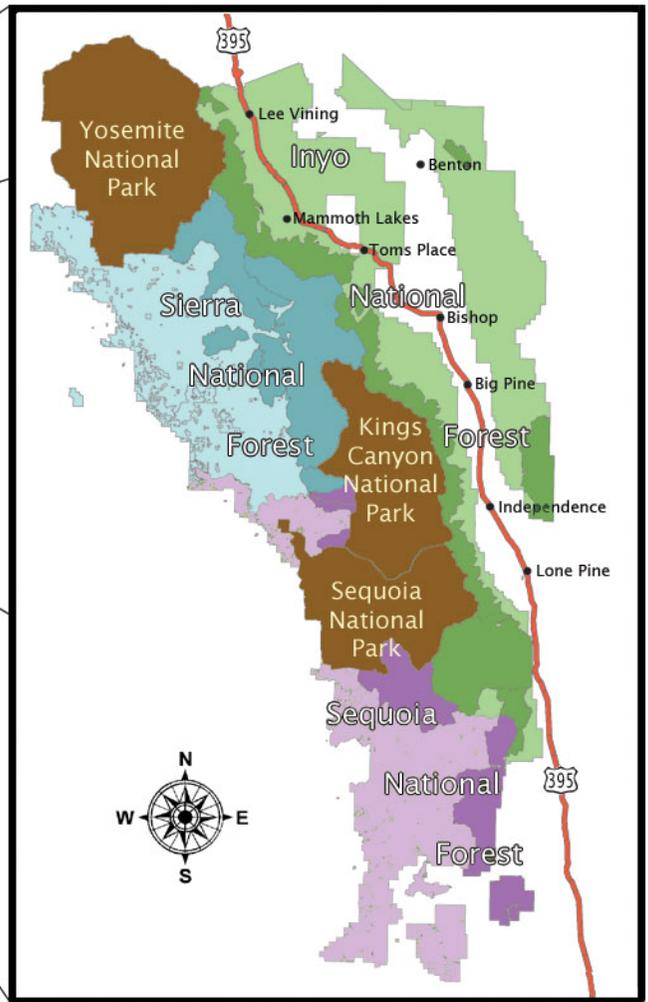
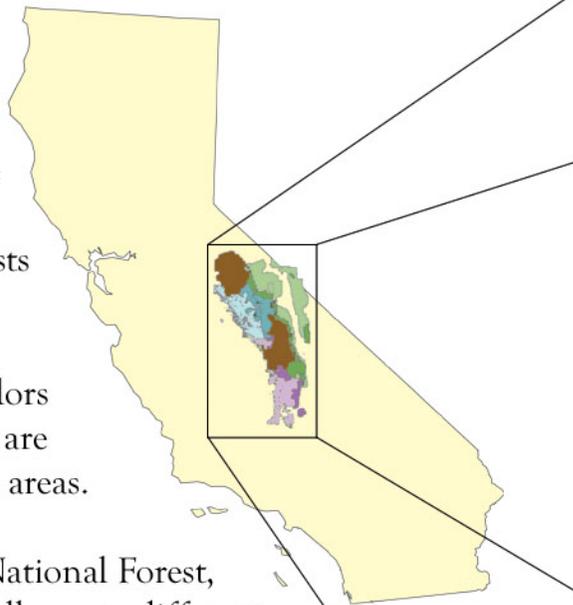


Here is a map of the Inyo National Forest and the surrounding National Forests and Parks.

The darker colors on each forest are the wilderness areas.

On the Inyo National Forest, there are actually seven different wilderness areas. They are the Hoover, Ansel Adams, John Muir, Boundary Peak, Inyo Mountains, Golden Trout, and South Sierra.

Please refer to the maps on the next page to distinguish between the seven wilderness areas.



For more information about commercial outfitters and guides, as well as commercial resorts and campgrounds, try the local Chamber of Commerce.

contact information

If someone is concerned because you are late returning from your trip, they should call the local Sheriff's office.

Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce
(760) 934-3068

Mammoth Lakes Visitor's Bureau
(760) 934-2712

Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce
(760) 932-7500

Independence Chamber of Commerce
(760) 878-0084

Bishop Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau
(760) 873-8405

June Lake Chamber of Commerce
(760) 647-6629

Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce
(760) 876-4444

Mono County Sheriff
(760) 935-4066

Bishop Sheriff
(760) 873-7887

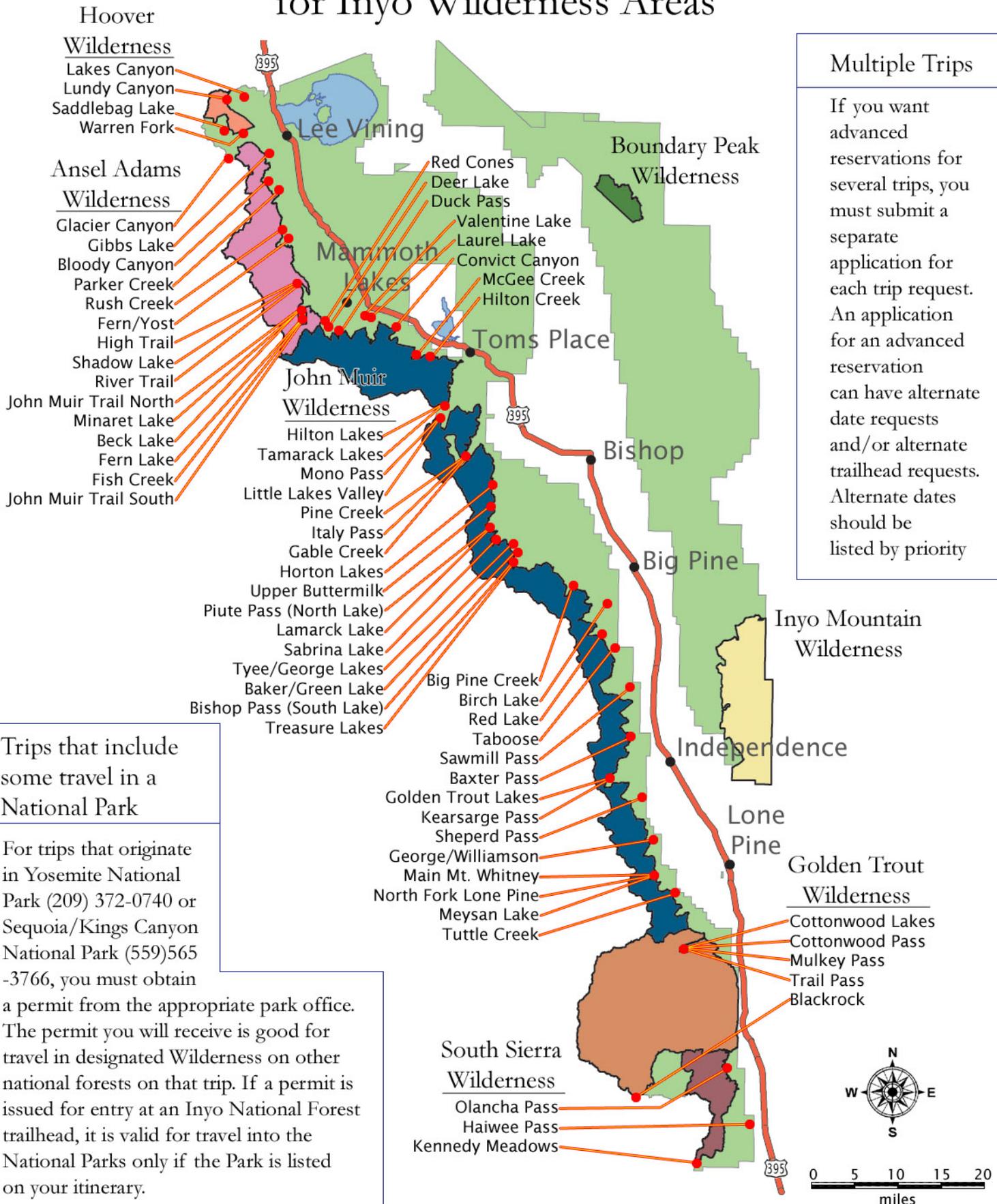
Independence Sheriff
(760) 878-0383

Lone Pine Sheriff
(760) 876-5606

Olancho Sheriff
(760) 852-4313

Entry Points and Trailheads

for Inyo Wilderness Areas



Trailhead Quotas

Hoover Wilderness	<i>reservable</i>	<i>walk-in</i>
Lakes Canyon	no quota	no quota
Lundy Canyon	no quota	no quota
Warren Fork	no quota	no quota
Saddlebag Lake	no quota	no quota

Ansel Adams Wilderness	<i>reservable</i>	<i>walk-in</i>
Beck	9	6
Bloody Canyon	5	3
Deer Lake	6	4
Fern Lake	6	4
Fern/Yost	5	3
Fish Creek	9	6
Gibbs	5	3
Glacier Canyon	5	3
High Trail	12	8
John Muir Trail North	6	4
JMT/PCT South	6	4
Minaret Creek	6	4
Parker Creek	6	4
Red Cones	9	6
River Trail	18	12
Rush Creek	18	12
Shadow	18	12

Golden Trout Wilderness	<i>reservable</i>	<i>walk-in</i>
Blackrock	no quota	no quota
Cottonwood Pass	24	16
Mulkey Pass	no quota	no quota
Trail Pass	no quota	no quota

South Sierra Wilderness	<i>reservable</i>	<i>walk-in</i>
Haiwee Pass	no quota	no quota
Kennedy Meadows (PCT)	no quota	no quota
Olancha Pass (Sage Flat)	no quota	no quota

John Muir Wilderness	<i>reservable</i>	<i>walk-in</i>
Baker/Green	5	3
Baxter Pass	5	3
Big Pine Creek (North Fork)	15	10
Big Pine Creek (South Fork)	7	5
Birch Lake	5	3
Bishop Pass	22	14
Convict	6	4
Cottonwood Lakes	36	24
Duck Lake	18	12
Gable Lake	5	3
George Lake	6	4
George/Williamson Creek	5	3
Golden Trout	6	4
Hilton Lakes/Creek	9	6
Horton	6	4
Italy Pass	5	3
Kearsarge	36	24
Lamarck	6	4
Laurel	5	3
Little Lakes Valley	15	10
McGee Creek	9	6
Meysan	6	4
Mono Pass	12	8
Mt. Whitney Day	100	0
Mt. Whitney Overnight	60	0
NF Lone Pine	6	4
Pine Creek	9	6
Piute Pass	18	12
Red Lake	5	3
Sabrina Lake	15	10
Sawmill Pass	6	4
Shepherd Pass	9	6
Taboose Creek	6	4
Trail Crest (exit quota)	15	10
Tamarack Lakes	6	4
Treasure Lakes	6	4
Tuttle Creek	5	3
Tyee	6	4
Upper Buttermilk	5	3
Valentine	5	3

More Information:

	Ansel Adams	John Muir	Mt. Whitney	All other areas	Golden Trout
Quota Period	May 1 through November 1	May 1 through November 1	May 1 through November	No Quotas	Some trails with quotas. Last Friday in June through September 15
Permits and Reservations	60% reservable via mail, phone, or fax. 40% walk-in	60% reservable via mail, phone, or fax. 40% walk-in	100% reservable	Walk-in	60% reservable via mail, phone, or fax. 40% walk-in
Reservation Fees	\$5.00 per person	\$5.00 per person	\$15.00 per person	No Charge	\$5.00 per person
Reservation Period	6 months to 2 days before trip	6 months to 2 days before trip	Lottery: February -by phone after April 20.	No Reservations Needed	6 months to 2 days before trip

