Strategy I. Reduce Use of the Entire Wilderness

TACTIC3: ENCOURAGE USE OF OTHER AREAS

PURPOSE
To reduce total use of the wilderness, particularly by people who place lower values on the area’s wilderness characteristics, to reduce social and ecological impacts.

DESCRIPTION
Tell prospective visitors about alternative places, particularly nonwilderness areas, and encourage them to go there. This could involve maps, brochures, answers to inquiries, and personal suggestions.

CURRENT USAGE
Infrequent. Programs to disperse use within the wilderness are more common.

COSTS TO VISITORS
Low. If information is presented accurately and without pressure, there should be almost no cost to visitors, and at least some visitors could find areas that better match their preferences. There could be costs to the current visitors to the other areas, however, if they have to contend with more visitors and their impact.

COSTS TO MANAGEMENT
Low. Might include costs for a brochure or map, but most information would be included in normal contacts with visitors. Training and preparation of background information materials would entail some costs.

EFFECTIVENESS
Unknown. Tests of use redistribution efforts have all been concerned with redistribution within a wilderness—not to other areas. Those studies have shown mixed results, but adequate information, well presented and in a timely way, has resulted in substantial shifts in use. We would expect moderate effectiveness of programs to shift some use to other areas.

COMMENTS
This technique deserves more use. It is nonauthoritarian and potentially helpful to visitors. Diverting some people less dependent on wilderness conditions to nonwilderness areas seems very desirable. Caution is needed to avoid arm-twisting. Information must be presented with ethical sensitivity; it must be truthful (don’t say there is good fishing if fishing is actually poor). It is even more difficult to decide whether to omit information about attractions or problems. Too much information might reduce visitors’ sense of discovery.

SOURCES