Strategy I. Reduce Use of the Entire Wilderness

TACTIC 4: REQUIRE CERTAIN SKILLS AND/OR EQUIPMENT

**PURPOSE**
By requiring certain skills or equipment, some potential visitors not possessing these skills or equipment will not be able to enter the area. This will reduce use.

**DESCRIPTION**
Require evidence of skill, usually in minimum-impact use, either through completion of an acceptable course or passing a test, and/or require possession and use of equipment that reduces social and ecological impacts, such as tents with their own poles; gas camp stoves; tents of subdued, natural colors; high-line hitching ropes for tying horses; etc.

**CURRENT USAGE**
None. Untried for purposes of reducing use. It has been used to modify type of use (tactic 26) particularly on whitewater rivers and for mountain climbers, for safety and low-impact reasons.

**COSTS TO VISITORS**
Low to moderate. Poses high costs for those visitors unable or unwilling to meet test or equipment requirements, or who feel the test is unfair. For others, costs are the time, effort, and money required to qualify. These costs need not be high relative to those associated with the trip itself. Costs are incurred offsite and during the planning stages of trips. Some required skill or equipment may contribute to more enjoyable trips for visitors.

**COSTS TO MANAGEMENT**
Moderate to high. Test development and administration, enforcement, and employee training will all add to costs. Testing skills would usually cost more than checking equipment. If other organizations, schools, and so on, did much of the skill testing, costs would be lower. Costs will be ongoing. Such requirements would be difficult to enforce without a permit system, with its associated costs.

**EFFECTIVENESS**
This technique will be effective only if skill and equipment requirements are so stringent that many potential visitors are eliminated. Moreover, the strategy of reducing total use is seldom of more than secondary importance for solving problems.

**COMMENTS**
This technique is likely to be much more useful as part of a program to modify character of use and reduce per capita impacts than to reduce total use. Acceptability to visitors varies from low to moderate.

**SOURCES**