

Wilderness.net's Mokelumne Wilderness Fact Sheet



Introduction

The United States Congress designated the Mokelumne Wilderness in 1964 and it now has a total of 104,050 acres. All of the wilderness is in California and is managed by the Forest Service.

Description

The Mokelumne River bisects remote mountainous terrain where elevations range from about 4,000 feet near Salt Springs Reservoir outside the southwest corner to over 10,000 feet on Round Top Peak in the north. Shallow valleys lying north of Mokelumne Peak (9,332 feet), in the southern portion of the area, hide many small lakes. The river canyon is extremely rugged and poison oak grows in profusion along the banks. In general, though, glaciers have smoothed the area, leaving the well-placed trails relatively easy to hike. In spring and summer, several large meadows scattered throughout the wild land bloom with a riot of wildflower color. You'll find stands of timber over much of this Wilderness. No fires are allowed above 8,000 feet, and in the Carson Pass Management Area including Winnemucca, Round Top, Fourth of July, and Emigrant Lakes, and on the north and east sides of Salt Springs Reservoir. The Raymond Peak area located in the eastern section, provides some additional mountain scenery. By late summer, seasonal water courses are often dry. A prolific trail system that includes 20 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail contributes to moderate to heavy human use in the Carson Pass Management Area. Most use occurs along the shores of Winnemucca, Round Top and Fourth of July Lake. The remainder of the wilderness area has far less use and provides many opportunities for experiencing solitude.

Leave No Trace

How to follow the seven standard Leave No Trace principles differs in different parts of the country (desert vs. Rocky Mountains). Click on any of the principles listed below to learn more about how they apply in the Mokelumne Wilderness.

1. [Plan Ahead and Prepare](#)
2. [Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces](#)
3. [Dispose of Waste Properly](#)
4. [Leave What You Find](#)
5. [Minimize Campfire Impacts](#)
6. [Respect Wildlife](#)
7. [Be Considerate of Other Visitors](#)

For more information on Leave No Trace, [Visit the Leave No Trace, Inc. website.](#)

Area Management

The Mokelumne Wilderness is part of the 110 million acre National Wilderness Preservation System. This System of lands provides clean air, water, and habitat critical for rare and endangered plants and animals. In wilderness, you can enjoy challenging recreational activities like hiking, backpacking, climbing, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, horse packing, bird watching, stargazing, and extraordinary opportunities for solitude. You play an important role in helping to *"secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness"* as called for by the Congress of the United States through the Wilderness Act of 1964. Please follow the requirements outlined below and use Leave No Trace techniques when visiting the Mokelumne Wilderness to ensure protection of this unique area.

General Wilderness Prohibitions

Motorized equipment and equipment used for mechanical transport is generally prohibited on all federal lands designated as wilderness. This includes the use of motor vehicles, motorboats, motorized equipment, bicycles, hang gliders, wagons, carts, portage wheels, and the landing of aircraft including helicopters, unless provided for in specific legislation.

In a few areas some exceptions allowing the use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport are described in the special regulations in effect for a specific area. Contact the Forest Service office or visit the websites listed below for more specific information.

These general prohibitions have been implemented for all national forest wildernesses in order to implement the provisions of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Wilderness Act requires management of human-caused impacts and protection of the area's wilderness character to insure that it is "unimpaired for the future use and enjoyment as wilderness." Use of the equipment listed as prohibited in wilderness is inconsistent with the provision in the Wilderness Act which mandates opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and that wilderness is a place that is in contrast with areas where people and their works are dominant.

Wilderness-Specific Regulations

Wilderness managers often need to take action to limit the impacts caused by visitor activities in order to protect the natural conditions of wilderness as required by the Wilderness Act of 1964. Managers typically implement 'indirect' types of actions such as information and education measures before selecting more restrictive measures. When regulations are necessary, they are implemented with the specific intent of balancing the need to preserve the character of the wilderness while providing for the use and enjoyment of wilderness.

The following wilderness regulations are in effect for this area. Not all regulations are in effect for every wilderness. Contact the Forest Service office or visit the websites listed on the 'Links' tab for more specific information about the regulations listed.

ALL VISITORS

-- Group size is limited to no more than 12 people per party for day trips.

-- During the summer, a \$5.00 day use/parking fee is charged at the Carson Pass, Carson Pass Overflow, Woods Lake and Meiss trailheads. A season day pass can be purchased for \$20.00. (Parking at the Carson Pass and Meiss Parking areas is limited to June 1st to October 1st due to its

operation as a State Sno-Park during the winter months.). Interagency Passes can be used as well. Please note – Woods Lake trailhead will be going under concession management which may result in an increased parking fee.

-- Campfires are prohibited above 8,000 feet, in the Carson Pass Management Area, and from the high water line lip to 4,600 feet in elevation on the north shore of Salt Springs Reservoir.

-- Pets must be leashed in the Carson Pass Management Area and under the owner's control in all other areas.

OVERNIGHT VISITORS

-- Group size is limited to no more than 8 people for overnight trips.

-- Permits are required for overnight stays. One permit per group is required. Permits can be obtained at the Carson Pass Information Station, Amador Ranger District, Calaveras Ranger District, Carson Ranger District, Bridgeport Ranger District and the Markleeville Chamber of Commerce. Day use permits are not required.

-- From Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend, an overnight stay limit of 2 nights is in effect for Round Top and Winnemucca Lakes and 3 nights for Fourth of July Lake.

-- In the Carson Pass Management Area, camp at least 100 feet away from streams, lakes, and trails.

-- Snow camping is not restricted to assigned sites when there is at least one foot of snow on the ground. Minimum distances from watersheds still apply.

STOCK USERS

-- Groups are limited to no more than 12 head of pack or saddle stock for both day and overnight use.

-- Grazing is prohibited within the Round Top Special Interest Area.

-- Riding or allowing stock off-trail within the Round Top Special Interest Area is prohibited.

Wilderness Permit System

A wilderness permit system has been implemented for this wilderness. This involves a use-limiting permit system with quotas and reservations. Wilderness permit systems are implemented to collect information on use levels and patterns and as an education and information tool. Use-limiting systems are implemented after monitoring has determined that current use levels are resulting in unacceptable impacts to the resource and/or to the wilderness recreation experience. These systems help distribute visitor use throughout the season and help minimize crowded conditions at popular areas. People interested in visiting the Mokelumne Wilderness should contact the national forest office or visit the websites listed below for more information about this permit system, which may vary by location or time of the year.

Fees

The following user fee system(s) have been implemented for this wilderness: TRAILHEAD PARKING. Fees are most often used to offset the operating costs of a permit system or to help fund

management activities such as trail maintenance. Contact the national forest office or visit the websites listed below for more specific information on this fee system.

Contacts

Amador Ranger District
26820 SILVER DRIVE
PIONEER, CA 95666

Phone: 209-295-4251

Calaveras Ranger District
PO BOX 500
HIGHWAY 4
HATHAWAY PINES, CA 95233

Phone: 209-795-1381

Carson Ranger District
1536 SOUTH CARSON STREET
CARSON CITY, NV 89701

Phone: 775-882-2766

Links to Other Websites

[* Mokelumne Wilderness Visitor Guide](#)

[Eldorado National Forest, Mokelumne Wilderness](#)

[Stanislaus National Forest, Mokelumne Wilderness](#)

[Toiyabe National Forest, Mokelumne Wilderness](#)

Links on Wilderness.net

[National, Regional and Local Wilderness Organizations \(NGOs\)](#)

A listing of societies, organizations, coalitions and other wilderness-related advocacy and stewardship groups.

[Career and Volunteer Opportunities](#)

A listing of sites providing information about wilderness- and environmentally-related career and volunteer opportunities.

Applicable Wilderness Law(s)

Law	Date	Acreage Change (in acres)
Public Law 88-577	September 3, 1964	50,400
The Wilderness Act - Public law 88-577 (9/3/1964) To establish a National Wilderness Preservation System for the permanent good of the whole people, and for other purposes		

 [download 88-577](#)

Public Law 98-425

September 28, 1984

55,000

California Wilderness Act of 1984 - Public Law 98-425 (9/28/1984) California Wilderness Act of 1984

 [download 98-425](#) - Relevant legislation found on page(s): 3.