

SOUTH SIERRA WILDERNESS GENERAL INFORMATION

The South Sierra Wilderness is beautiful, but remember that it is also primitive, and you will be on your own! Before going in, check with the local ranger station for latest conditions and hazards. Sign trailhead register before entering the wilderness area.

LOCATION AND ACCESS

South Sierra borders Golden Trout Wilderness on its northern boundary and Dome Land Wilderness on the South. It is all within the South Fork of the Kern River watershed.

Eastside access is via Nine Mile Canyon Rd (J41) from US Highway 395 to Kennedy Meadows Rd. From the west, access is from Tulare County Rd M99 via Sherman Pass Rd (22S05). From Blackrock Information Center forest roads will take you to trails at Albanita, Broder, and Lost Meadows. The Monache Meadow area also has trails into the South Sierra from the north.

Description

Fragile meadowlands, diversity of flora and fauna between forested ridges, rolling hills, and craggy, steep peaks describe this wilderness. A relatively gentle terrain area of 24,650 acres on the Sequoia National Forest portion is ideally suited to family-oriented recreation. The more adventurous can frequent the 38,350 acres along the Sierra Crest on the Inyo Forest which completes the 63,000 acre South Sierra Wilderness. Exposed rock is mostly granitic with some volcanic features. Elevations range from 6,100 feet near Kennedy Meadows to the summit of Olancho Peak at 12,123 feet.

FISHING AND HUNTING

Fishing and hunting is permitted under State regulations. There are over 25 miles of streams with unique South Fork Kern Trout-subspecies of the California Golden Trout.

TRAILS

Trails extend 30 miles for horse and hikers, including the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT). The trails leading out of Kennedy Meadows Campground into the South Sierra are the PCT and Wildrose Trail.

DRINKING WATER

Visitors should not drink from creeks and springs without properly treating the water. Recommended treatment is to bring clear water to a rolling boil for 5 minutes or use a filter/purifying system that eliminates giardia and waterborne bacteria.

WILDERNESS ETHIC

When selecting a campsite, camp at least 100 ft. from water and camp on bare hard ground. Pack out what you pack in. Body waste is to be buried 6 inches deep and 200 feet from water sources or camps. Bury or pack all toilet paper, DO NOT BURN. Keep fires small and put them out half hour before leaving by adding water and stirring the ashes. Don't use dirt to put out fires. They can smolder for hours and it makes the pit very difficult to clean out. Never wash directly in a water source; clothes, dishes, or yourself. Carry water 100 feet from the source before washing. Biodegradable soaps pollute, dispose of them like any soap, well away from water.

WILDERNESS REGULATIONS

All mechanized equipment and vehicles, including mountain bikes, are prohibited within the Wilderness area. A maximum group size of 15 people/25 head of stock per party has been adopted. A visitor permit is not required for entering the Wilderness, but a campfire permit is required for gas lanterns, stoves and campfires. Please check with a National Forest office for current information, conditions and regulations.

*All information obtained from the US Department of Agriculture and the US Forest Service.