

Department of the Interior  
U.S. Bureau of Land Management  
Northern California District  
Arcata Field Office

**BLM**

# King Range National Conservation Area

## 2012 Business Plan



**NATIONAL  
CONSERVATION  
LANDS**

California





Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Northern California District  
Arcata Field Office  
King Range National Conservation Area  
King Range Wilderness

## 2012 Business Plan

Wilderness Permit Program and New Individual Special Recreation Permit Fee Schedule  
Developed Campground Expanded Amenity Fee Schedule

Photo, front cover: The Lost  
Coast Trail near Sea Lion Gulch

Photo, opposite page: Giant  
Green Anemone feed in tidal  
pools adjacent to the Lost  
Coast Trail



**United States Department of the Interior**  
**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

Arcata Field Office  
1695 Heindon Road  
Arcata, CA 95521  
[www.blm.gov/ca/arcata](http://www.blm.gov/ca/arcata)



July 29, 2013

Dear Reader,

Attached for your review and comment is the *Draft 2012 Business Plan for the King Range National Conservation Area (NCA)*. In this business plan, the Arcata Field Office proposes a new individual Special Recreation Permit requirement and fee of \$5 per-person, per-day for overnight use in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry. This new Wilderness Permit Program would replace the current Backcountry Permit Program. The Wilderness Permit Program would, for the first time, limit overnight use in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry through an allocation system administered through the National Reservation Service at [Recreation.gov](http://Recreation.gov).

The Arcata Field Office also proposes increasing the existing fee schedule for the six King Range NCA developed campgrounds from the current \$8 to \$15 per night, per site. This would affect the Mattole, Honeydew Creek, Horse Mountain, Tolkan, Nadelos, and Wailaki campgrounds.

Your comments on these proposals are welcome. You can send them by email to [ca338@blm.gov](mailto:ca338@blm.gov). You can mail comments or deliver them in person to the BLM King Range Project Office, PO Drawer 189, 768 Shelter Cove Road, Whitethorn, CA 95589, or the BLM Arcata Field Office, 1695 Heindon Rd., Arcata, CA 95521.

These actions will benefit the King Range and its users in several ways. Limiting backcountry and wilderness overnight use through an allocation system will prevent crowding that impacts natural resources and diminishes visitors' wilderness experiences. The backcountry and campground fees would help generate funds for on-the-ground management actions to protect the wilderness character of the King Range Wilderness, and maintenance and improvements to King Range NCA campgrounds and facilities. All funds raised through these fees would be retained for use exclusively in the King Range.

Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on the Draft 2012 Business Plan.

Sincerely,

Lynda Roush  
Arcata Field Manager

# Executive Summary

The King Range National Conservation Area (King Range NCA) is part of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). The NLCS contains some of the West's most spectacular landscapes. It includes over 887 federally recognized areas and approximately 27 million acres of National Monuments, National Conservation Areas, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Scenic and Historic Trails, and Conservation Lands of the California Desert.

The King Range NCA is located in California's Redwood Coast region and is administered by the BLM Arcata Field Office. This business plan was prepared under the authorization of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) of 2004 to implement key actions of the 2012 King Range Wilderness and Rocks & Island Wilderness Management Plan (King Range WMP) and the 2005 King Range NCA Resource Management Plan (King Range NCA RMP). Under FLREA, the BLM is authorized to collect and retain Amenity and Special Recreation Permit (SRP) fees.

The King Range NCA fee collection program was initially managed under Section 315 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996, commonly known as the "Recreation Fee Demonstration Program", and management continued under annual reauthorizations of this legislation until the passage of FLREA in 2004.

The Wilderness Act, Federal Regulation, and BLM policy require BLM manage wilderness areas to preserve the component qualities of wilderness character: naturalness, undeveloped, untrammeled, and solitude or a primitive and unconfined recreation. Since wilderness designation the King Range Wilderness has experienced a 78% increase in visitor use, from 12,480 visitor days in 2007 to 22,324 visitor days in 2011. This business plan implements decisions in the King Range NCA RMP and the King Range WMP intended to protect the wilderness quality of solitude. These plans direct BLM to establish visitor capacities, and to manage total visitor load within the King Range Wilderness. Limiting overnight use will maintain opportunities for solitude at most camping locations, where studies have identified

campsite interactions as having the most impact on visitors' perceptions of solitude.

Three specific actions are proposed and analyzed in this business plan:

1. The BLM proposes to implement a new individual Special Recreation Permit (SRP) requirement for overnight use in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area. This new program is to be called the "Wilderness Permit Program." This action will replace the current Backcountry Permit Program that was primarily used to track and estimate visitor use and to help communicate regulations. To maintain opportunities for visitors to experience solitude the Wilderness Permit Program will, for the first time, limit overnight use in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area through an allocation system administered through Recreation.gov.
2. Concurrent with the individual SRP requirement, the BLM will enact a new fee schedule for overnight wilderness and backcountry users of \$5 per person per day. Currently no fee or management allocation exists for individual overnight use of the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area. The proposed individual SRP fee of \$5 per person per day is consistent with organized group SRP fees established by the BLM Director, updated every three years based on the Implicit Price Deflator Index, and published in the Federal Register. Future adjustments to the proposed individual SRP fee will also be consistent with changes in SRP fees set by the BLM Director. This Business Plan also used a fair market assessment tool to ensure the proposed fee is comparable with existing fee schedules for coastal, backcountry, and wilderness public land units in California, Arizona, Utah, and Washington managed by BLM, US Forest Service, National Park Service, and California State Parks.

If the proposed SRP fee schedule is not implemented concurrently with the individual SRP requirement for overnight King Range Wilderness and Backcountry use the BLM will not be able to successfully meet the objectives of the Wilderness Permit Program and actively manage visitor use to the extent the BLM has recognized is necessary to protect the qualities of wilderness character as required by the Wilderness Act, Federal regulation, and BLM policy.

3. The BLM will increase the existing expanded amenity fee schedule for the six developed campgrounds. This action will modify the

existing fee schedule from \$8 per site per night to \$15 per site per night and will allow BLM to provide safe, clean and fully functional campground amenities to the public. This Business Plan used a fair market assessment tool to determine the proposed fee schedule for overnight use of the developed campgrounds.

Steadily increasing costs of janitorial service contracts and supplies, maintaining potable water systems that meet Safe Drinking Water Act standards, maintaining, repairing, and replacing facilities throughout their lifecycles necessitate the proposed increase of the expanded amenity fee schedule for the six developed King Range NCA campgrounds. Currently, BLM collects an average of \$16,453, or 7.5% of the actual costs required for King Range NCA campground operations from the existing \$8 fee. The proposed fee increase to \$15 is expected to generate \$31,185 in fee revenue, based on historic use, or 12.5% of actual campground operating costs.

BLM anticipates collecting from \$87,325 to \$111,750 in fee revenue from the Wilderness Permit Program and up to \$31,185 in revenue with implementation of the modified fee schedule for the developed campgrounds. Projections of future revenue streams were determined using historic visitor use data and assumptions of future use and are explained in detail in this plan.

The Arcata Field Office and King Range NCA will utilize the majority (at least 85 percent) of the funds collected through these new and expanded fee schedules to enhance visitor services and experiences; protect wilderness character, recreation values, and natural and cultural resources; and to maintain, repair and improve campground and other supporting recreation facilities for visitor enjoyment and health and safety. Up to 15 percent of the funds collected may be spent on managerial and indirect costs for the administration of the fee programs.

Revenue from the proposed Individual SRP fee schedule will fund additional staffing (ie, “boots on the ground”) required to actively manage wilderness visitor use: monitor permit compliance and visitor use patterns, provide increased visitor contacts, monitor and evaluate actual visitor use versus target visitor capacities, and evaluate the effectiveness of the permit/allocation program in meeting plan objectives. Revenue from the proposed fee would also fund expanded maintenance of King Range Wilderness trails,

restoration of campsite and resource impacts, trash removal, and developing improved off-site wilderness recreation information resources.

Revenue from the proposed expanded amenity fee increase would be used to continue consistent, year-around campground janitorial service (weekly during winter, bi-weekly April–October, and thrice-weekly during summer holidays) , provide dependable delivery of potable water meeting Safe Drinking Water Act standards, maintain and repair campground facilities, and replace facilities at the end of their lifecycles.

Implementation of the Wilderness Permit Program and proposed new Individual SRP fee, and the increased expanded amenity fee schedule will occur after a public review and participation period, after presentation to and approval by the California Recreation Resource Advisory Committee, and after publication of a Federal Register Notice of the proposed fees for a period of six months.

## Contact for this Business Plan

Justin R Robbins, Outdoor Recreation Planner

Email: [jrobbins1@blm.gov](mailto:jrobbins1@blm.gov)

Phone: (707) 986-5403

Fax: (707) 986-5401

Gary Pritchard-Peterson, NCA Manager

Email: [gpeterso@blm.gov](mailto:gpeterso@blm.gov)

Phone: (707) 986-5402

Fax: (707) 986-5401

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# I. Introduction to the King Range National Conservation Area and the Lost Coast

In Northern California, the Pacific Ocean and the North Coast Range meet dramatically to form a spectacular setting known as the “Lost Coast”. About 200 miles north of San Francisco and 60 miles south of Eureka an abrupt wall of mountains climb 4,000 feet above the Pacific Ocean, making the area one of the most remote stretches of coastline in the continental U.S. (Figure 1.1). The elemental beauty and ever-changing mood of the ocean meeting the wild, undeveloped coastline, old-growth forests, and rugged peaks of the King Range inspired its original designation as a National Conservation Area in 1970. This area continues to draw people from all over the world to visit the “Lost Coast” of California.

**Figure 1.1**  
King Range Wilderness



The passage of the King Range Act (PL 91-476) in 1970 designated approximately 38 miles of mountainous coastline as the King Range NCA. Under this law, Congress directed the BLM to consolidate and acquire lands, restore habitat and watersheds, and provide for public recreation in the area. Since that time, the BLM has worked to achieve these goals, to restore watersheds providing habitat for threatened Pacific salmon and other old-growth dependent species, and to manage the unique, primitive coastline and its wilderness characteristics for an ever growing and diverse public.

In 2006 the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act designated 42,625 acres of the King Range NCA (approximately 67 percent) as the King Range Wilderness. In addition, approximately 2 acres of offshore rocks and islands within 3 miles of the King Range coastline were designated the Rocks and Islands Wilderness (Figure 1.2). The Backcountry Area is defined in the King Range WMP as 2.5 miles of non-wilderness coastal strand (approximately 70 acres) extending north from the wilderness boundary at Four Mile Creek to the Mattole River.

The BLM completed the King Range WMP in 2011, identifying several management actions that would balance the preservation of wilderness characteristics with wilderness recreation activities in the area. The current proposed business plan will implement specific King Range WMP actions, as well as adjusting management practices in the King Range front country area (developed campgrounds) pursuant to the 2005 King Range NCA RMP.

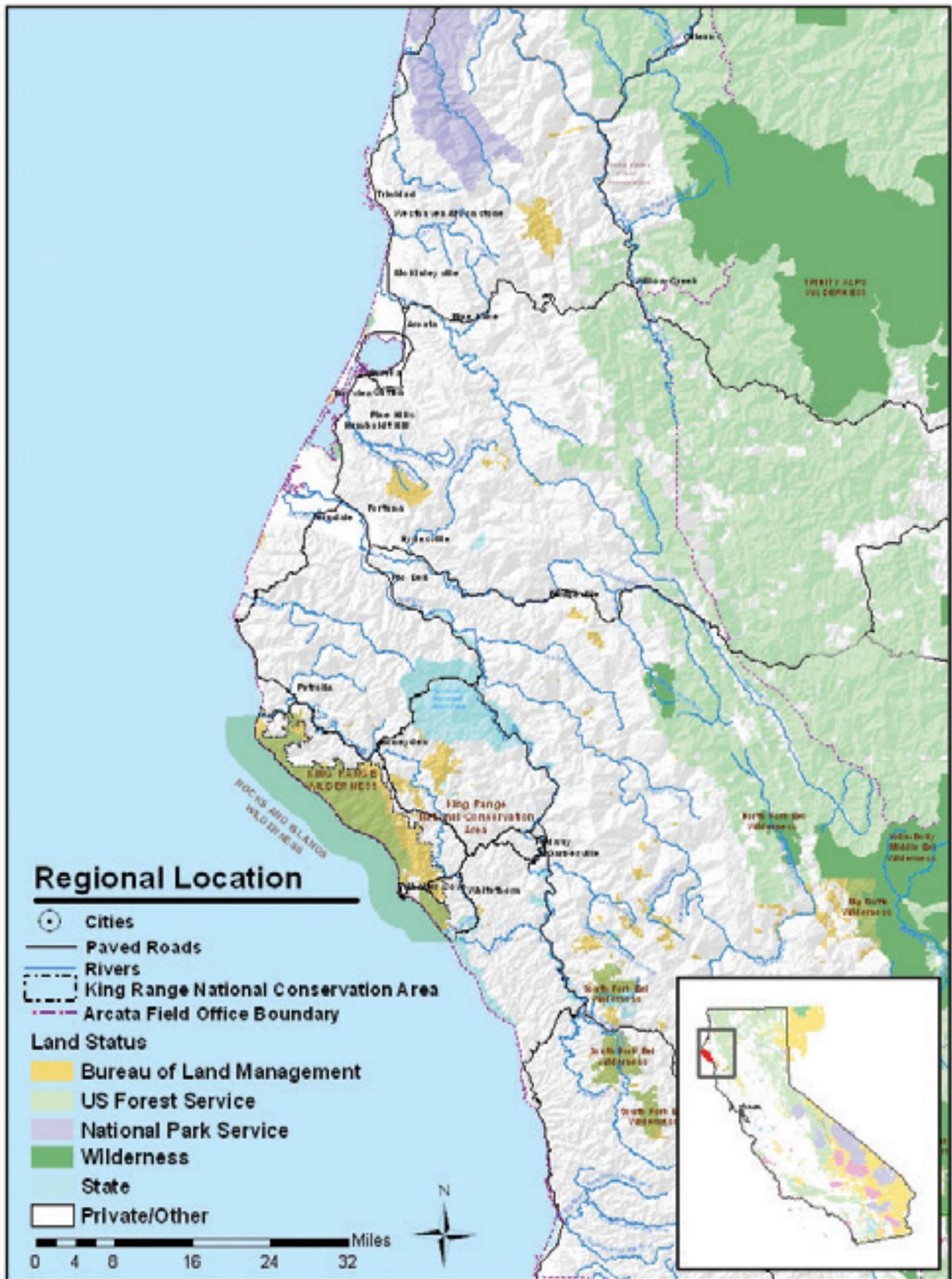


Figure 1.2 King Range NCA and Wilderness Area Vicinity Map

## II. Fee Area Description

### A. Introduction

The King Range NCA is currently comprised of approximately 62,636 acres of public land and extends along 38 miles of coastline between the mouth of the Mattole River and the northern boundary of Sinkyone Wilderness State Park near Whale Gulch (Figure 1.2). All public lands affected by this business plan are part of the King Range NCA, including the King Range Wilderness, which is located in Humboldt and Mendocino Counties, California. The area is administered by the BLM King Range Project Office which is part of the Arcata Field Office, Northern California District. The King Range NCA is located 200 miles north of San Francisco, CA and 60 miles south of Eureka, within the 2nd Congressional District of California. Gateway communities include Petrolia and Honeydew in the northern area and the towns of Redway, Garberville, and Shelter Cove in the southern extent.

The physical landscape is characterized by an abrupt mountain range rising 4,000 feet above the Pacific Ocean. During construction of the coastal highway (State Highway 1) the route was forced to move inland in order to avoid this steep mountain terrain. The result was one of the most spectacular and remote stretches of coastline in the contiguous United States. With its wild, undeveloped beaches, lack of paved roads and rugged peaks, the remote region is only accessed by a few back roads, and the recreation opportunities are as diverse as the landscape.

### B. Special Designations

In addition to the wilderness designation, numerous streams in the King Range NCA are suitable for inclusion into the federal Wild and Scenic River system. The King Range NCA also contains two administratively-designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The Mattole ACEC contains 655 acres that were designated to protect the riparian and wildlife values of the Mattole River estuary. The Mill Creek ACEC contains 680 acres designated to protect old-growth forest and water quality as a tributary to the lower Mattole River.

## C. Natural Communities

The north coast of California has a Mediterranean climate characterized by cool wet winters and hot dry summers. Annual precipitation averages between 100 inches and 200 inches on the crest of the King Range. The minimal snow fall typically does not accumulate in amounts that limit access for extended periods of time. The area is considered a year-round destination point and seasonal activities are pursued by various user groups.

Many different landscapes and natural communities are found in the area including: coastal beach and intertidal zone, coastal scrub, grasslands, chaparral, forest, rivers, and streams (Figure 2.1). The Douglas-fir covered peaks attract hikers, hunters, campers, and mushroom collectors, while the coast beckons to surfers, anglers, beachcombers, and abalone divers. Each of these natural communities is represented in the wilderness, backcountry, and frontcountry areas that draw visitors from around the world who wish to experience its unique character.

## D. Administration

The King Range NCA is managed as a Special Recreation Management Area and is a component of the BLM's NLCS. The King Range NCA was selected as a Fee Demonstration pilot project site in 1996 and managed under Section 315 of the "Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996", also known as the "Recreation Fee Demonstration Program" and management continued under annual reauthorizations of this legislation. The passage of the "Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, 2004" (FLREA) replaced the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program. Under FLREA, Congress authorized the BLM to collect, and locally retain, two types of recreation fees that may be used to repair, maintain, and upgrade recreational facilities and services to meet public demand: Special Recreation Fees and Amenity Recreation Fees. As authorized by FLREA, and previously as a Fee Demonstration Site, revenue from recreation fees collected in the King Range NCA are retained locally for facility repair, maintenance, enhancement, interpretation, visitor information services, visitor needs assessments, signs, law enforcement related to public use and recreation, and direct operating or capital costs associated with the recreation and visitor services programs.

Commercial and organized group use of the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area are authorized through BLM's SRP Regulations (43 CFR 2930). SRP fees are established by the BLM Director, updated every 3 years based on the Implicit Price Deflator Index, and published

in the Federal Register. Currently commercial SRP groups pay fees at 3 percent of gross revenue while organized group SRP fees are \$5 per person per day. The King Range NCA manages approximately 40 SRPs each year authorizing overnight backpacking use in the King Range NCA. Currently, individuals are not required to pay a fee or obtain an individual SRP for overnight use of the King Range NCA.



**Figure 2.1** Tide pools in the King Range NCA

## **E. Traditional Cultural Community**

The King Range NCA is located within the ancestral homeland of two Native America Tribes, the Mattole and Sinkyone. There is an archaeological record of intensive human use of coastal resources extending back several thousand years. Descendants of these Native American groups continue to utilize traditional resources available on the landscape within the King Range NCA.

It is BLM policy to support traditional native cultural practitioners in gathering culturally utilized plants for personal and community traditional use. A Traditional Gathering Policy specifies that the BLM grant free use, without a permit, to native traditional practitioners for the purposes of traditional cultural gathering (IM No. CA-2007-017, April 10, 2007). This plan will not restrict traditional cultural gathering by traditional practitioners or require a fee for such activities.

## F. Partners

The BLM maintains several partnerships to help in the management of the King Range NCA. Some of these partners include California State Parks, Lost Coast Interpretive Association (LCIA), Mattole Salmon Group (MSG), Mattole Restoration Council (MRC), International Mountain Bicycling Association, Southern Humboldt Youth Alive, and the American Hiking Society (AHS).

Since the late-1990s, the BLM has partnered with the AHS Volunteer Vacations program in bringing volunteers to the King Range for a week-long backpack trip where participants perform service projects along the northern section of the Lost Coast Trail. Service projects include trail clearing, reconstructing trail tread, removing user-built structures and fire rings, and treating invasive weeds. These projects help to protect natural resources and improve the experience for wilderness users. BLM will continue its relationship with AHS into the future and hopes to create more volunteer vacation opportunities.

For more than 3 decades the BLM has partnered with MSG and MRC to improve conditions in the Mattole River watershed and to assist

**Figure 2.2** Members of American Conservation Experience at the start their Lost Coast Trail service project



with salmon recovery efforts. This has included the removal of abandoned road networks, tree planting, stream improvements, and fish monitoring.

Since 2000, LCIA has helped the BLM to educate King Range users to appreciate and respect the Lost Coast's unique environment. LCIA produced an educational video "Lost Coast Adventure" to help individuals and groups prepare for a safe and enjoyable Lost Coast backpack trip. The BLM currently requires that all commercial and organized groups watch this program prior to embarking on their hike.

The BLM partners each year with Southern Humboldt Youth Alive and Nick's Interns by sponsoring overnight backpacks for underserved local populations in the King Range. The BLM continues to seek opportunities that allow underserved populations to experience the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area.

The BLM has also partnered with the Student Conservation Association, California Conservation Corps, and the American Conservation Experience to help maintain and improve the King Range NCA trail system and to assist in restoring wilderness character through various projects including invasive species treatments and marine debris/user trash removal (Figure 2.2).

### **G. New Fee Area: King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area**

The King Range Wilderness is one of the largest coastal wilderness areas in the contiguous U.S. Only Olympic National Park in Washington State, Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, and Redwood National and State Parks in California have similarly long stretches of wilderness coastline. Sinkyone Wilderness State Park's coastline is mostly inaccessible to hikers and equestrians due to steep coastal terrain and lack of continuous beach trail. Redwood National and State Parks' coastline has greater road access; backpackers share portions of roads with motorists and are required to use designated campsites. Like the other parks, the King Range NCA encompasses a mosaic of naturally functioning ecosystems and provides outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation.

The King Range Wilderness (42,625 acres) and King Range NCA Backcountry Area encompass beaches, coastal terraces, and mountain ridges that provide unique recreation opportunities to individuals, families, and organized and commercial groups. The King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area receive day and overnight users throughout the year.

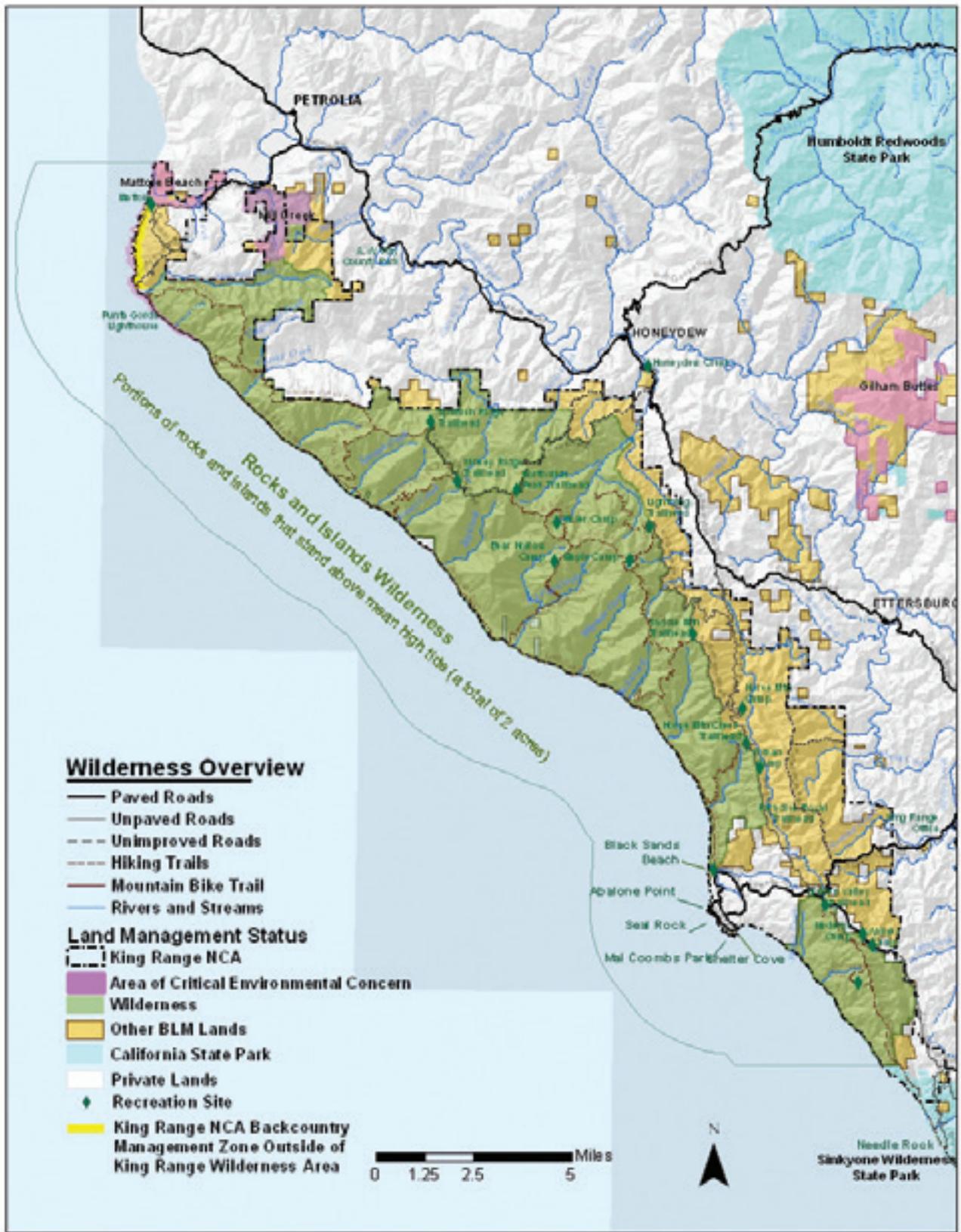


Figure 2.3 King Range NCA, King Range & Rocks and Island Wilderness, Backcountry Area Map

The King Range NCA and King Range Wilderness contain approximately 80 miles of hiking trails in locations on both the shoreline and on the ridges and mountain peaks immediately adjacent to the coast. The majority of these trails were constructed in the 1960s and 1970s and since that time many of them have been expanded, re-developed, and even re-routed. Established trailheads are at the following locations: Black Sands Beach, Mattole Beach, Northslide Peak, Kinsey Ridge, Spanish Ridge, Lightning, Saddle Mountain, Horse Mountain Creek, Hidden Valley, Nadelos and Wailaki Campgrounds, and Windy Point. Major trails in the King Range include:

*Buck Creek Trail:* This 3+ mile long trail drops nearly 3,300 vertical feet from the King Crest Trail to the beach.

*Kinsey Ridge Trail:* Gated at the end of the Smith-Etter Road on Kinsey Ridge this trail drops 2,450 feet in over 4 miles from the trailhead to the beach.

*Spanish Ridge Trail:* This trail follows a former roadbed for about 2 miles from the Spanish Ridge Trailhead before splitting off from the Cooskie Creek Trail and descending down a former road 2,400 vertical feet in just over 3 miles to the ocean.

*Rattlesnake Ridge Trail:* This 5 mile long trail drops 3,500 vertical feet from the King Crest near Miller Loop Trail to Big Flat.

*Cooskie Creek Trail and Spur:* This 13 mile trail generally follows old ranch roads from Spanish Ridge to the beach between Fourmile Creek and Punta Gorda Lighthouse. The Cooskie Creek Spur is a shortcut to the beach, dropping 750 vertical feet in 1.2 miles.

*Lightning Trail:* This trail is the shortest route to King Peak climbing 1,800 feet in 2 miles.

*Horse Mountain Creek Trail:* This ridge to beach trail drops 1,500 feet in 3.8 miles.

*Chemise Mountain Trail:* A short connector trail less than 1 mile in length provides access to the Lost Coast Trail from Nadelos and Wailaki campgrounds.

*King Crest Trail National Recreation Trail:* This 11 mile trail traverses the King Crest, the “spine” of the King Range.

*Lost Coast National Recreation Trail:* This 52 mile long trail is comprised of two sections in the King Range NCA, and one section in the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. The northern, coastal section of the Lost Coast Trail traverses more than 24 miles of beach and coastal

terrace beginning at the Mattole Trailhead on the north end and ending at the Black Sands Beach Trailhead near Shelter Cove on the south end (Figure 2.4). The southern, upland section of the Lost Coast Trail begins at the Hidden Valley Trailhead outside of the community of Shelter Cove and traverses 6 miles connecting to the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park near Whale Gulch. The remaining 22 miles of the Lost Coast Trail traverses coastal bluffs and ridge tops of the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, ending at the mouth of Usal Creek at the south end of the state park. For the remainder of this document, the term “Lost Coast Trail” refers only to those portions managed by the BLM within the King Range NCA.

**Figure 2.4** Hikers along the Lost Coast Trail



Analysis and observations of user behavior (described in Section V) indicate that more than 80 percent of King Range Wilderness visitor use occurs on the 1,200 acres immediately adjacent to the coast. In particular, overnight wilderness and backcountry use primarily occurs along the northern section of the Lost Coast Trail. For much of this area, sheer cliffs, thick vegetation, and the nearby ocean make it virtually impossible to travel outside of the coastal corridor. The BLM maintains an additional 66-mile network of trails that provides access to the upland areas above the Lost Coast Trail; however, visitor use is not spread throughout the whole wilderness area, due to individuals and

groups preferring the coastal sections over the upland trails of the King Range Wilderness. Four maintained backcountry camps and water sources provide additional access and visitor safety for overnight use in the uplands of the King Range NCA. Most visitors backpacking along the coastal section overnight near creeks where water sources are available and hikers can safely camp above high tides. Lost Coast Trail users frequently congregate in a few specific locations due to limited camping sites, average hiking distances, and tidal conditions (Figure 2.5).

**Figure 2.5** Hikers congregate at Buck Creek in the King Range Wilderness



### H. Expanded Amenity Fee Area: King Range NCA Campgrounds

The BLM manages a mix of developed facilities in the frontcountry including campgrounds, picnic areas, scenic vistas, and trailheads. There is also a frontcountry hiking trail system and a mountain biking trail system. There are six campgrounds with a total of 54 sites that are currently in operation and serviced by the BLM. The campgrounds and campsites vary in terms of site layout, vegetative screening, proximity to residential areas and roads, and water availability. Each campground

and level of current service is described below and listed from north to south.

1. **Mattole Campground:** Includes 14 tent/trailer campsites with picnic tables, fire rings, potable water, trash receptacles, and vault toilets. Mattole Campground is the only developed beach campground in the King Range NCA (Figure 2.6). It is serviced weekly by BLM staff and BLM contractors. Year round visitor use occurs at the popular campground and requires BLM to regularly pump water, remove trash, clean toilets, and conduct law enforcement patrols.

**Figure 2.6** Developed campsites at Mattole Campground



2. **Honeydew Creek Campground:** Includes five tent/trailer sites adjacent to Honeydew Creek. Picnic tables, fire rings, vault toilets, and trash receptacles are provided. No potable water is available. BLM removes trash, cleans toilets, and conducts law enforcement patrols.
3. **Horse Mountain Campground:** The oldest of the King Range NCA campgrounds offers nine tent/trailer sites in a secluded forested setting. Picnic tables, fire rings, vault toilets, and trash receptacles are provided. Potable water is not available. BLM removes trash, cleans toilets, and conducts law enforcement patrols.
4. **Tolkan Campground:** Includes five trailer and four tent campsites and serves as a trailhead to the Paradise Royale Mountain Bike Trail System and Terrain Park. Picnic tables, fire rings, potable water, trash receptacles, and vault toilets are all provided and BLM

regularly pumps water, removes trash, cleans toilets, and conducts law enforcement patrols.

5. Nadelos Campground: This “walk-in” campground has eight tent sites with picnic tables, fire rings, potable water, trash receptacles, and vault toilets. The campground also serves as a trailhead for the Bear Creek Interpretive Trail and the Chemise Mountain Trail. Nadelos Campground may be reserved in advance for overnight group use (up to 60 persons).
6. Wailaki Campground: Includes 13 tent/trailer sites with picnic tables, fire rings, potable water, trash receptacles, and vault toilets. The campground also serves as a trailhead for the Bear Creek Interpretive Trail and the Chemise Mountain Trail.

The following rules will continue to be enforced at the King Range NCA developed campgrounds:

1. King Range NCA campground sites will continue to be offered on a first come, first served basis and campers will deposit fees in the iron ranger. BLM Law Enforcement rangers will check occupied campsites for fee compliance.
2. Fees are due within 30 minutes after arrival and by 12:00 noon each day thereafter for campers staying additional nights. Campers will follow instructions on Permit Fee Envelopes at the Fee Station (43 CFR 8365.2-3(a)).
3. Up to eight people will be authorized to occupy a campsite overnight.
4. Up to two vehicles will be authorized to occupy a campsite overnight. Vehicles shall be parked on campsite parking spurs or other parking lots. Vehicles shall remain within parking barriers and shall not be parked along roadways or on vegetation.
5. Persons may camp within the Arcata Field Office (including the King Range NCA) for a total period of not more than 14 days during any calendar year. The 14 day limit may be reached either through a number of separate visits or through a period of continuous occupation.

### III. Proposed Fee Schedules

#### A. Wilderness Permit Program

This plan proposes that a new individual (private, non-commercial) SRP fee of \$5 per person per day will be imposed for all overnight users in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area (Table 3.1). Each permit issued will authorize a party from 1 person to 15 persons to recreate in the area for a maximum duration of up to 14 days. A permit allocation system will be put in place and overnight visitors will need to obtain a permit in advance through the National Reservation System at Recreation.gov or on same day entries by visiting the King Range NCA Project Office or Arcata Field Office. The total number of persons entering the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area on any day will be limited to 60 persons per day during the peak season of May 15th through September 15th and 30 persons per day during the off season of September 16th through May 14th. The BLM proposes to implement this new fee structure for individual overnight use of the wilderness and backcountry areas of the King Range NCA by September 2013. The proposed individual SRP fee of \$5 per person per day is consistent with organized group SRP fees established by the BLM Director, which is updated every three years based on the Implicit Price Deflator Index, and published in the Federal Register. Future adjustments in the proposed individual SRP fee will also be consistent with changes in SRP fees set by the BLM Director.

**Table 3.1** Fee schedule

King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area	Overnight Use Existing Fee:	Overnight Use Proposed Fee:
	No Fee	\$5/per person/per day

#### B. Business Rules for the Wilderness Permit Program

In addition to the proposed fee schedule, the following business rules (code of conduct) will advance through the federal register process and will be implemented:

1. Individual SRPs will be required for all individuals and/or groups who camp overnight in the King Range Wilderness and/or Backcountry Area. Maximum group size is 15 persons.

2. Individual SRP fees will be calculated at a per day rate not a per night rate. The minimal time for which an overnight user will be issued a permit in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area is two days.
3. Individual SRP fees will be calculated based on the number of persons in the party 16 years of age and above.
4. Commercial and organized group SRP starts between May 15th and September 15th will be limited to no more than 50 percent of the total persons entering the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area in a single day. All potential starts will be available to commercial and organized group SRPs from September 16th to May 14th.
5. There will be no more than 30 commercial and/or organized group SRP starts in a single day, year round.
6. Individual SRP fees will not be discounted during the off season.
7. All (individual, commercial, organized group) SRPs will be available on a first come, first served basis until the maximum allocation is reached.
8. A portion of the starts will also be distributed on a first come, first serve basis, and available only for “walk-in” users. “Walk-in” users will obtain their permit, in person, from the BLM at the Arcata Field Office or at the King Range Project Office, and can do so up to 24 hours in advance. This designated portion will be 8 of 60 starts during high use season and 8 of 30 starts during the low use season.
9. All SRP holders will receive a refund of estimated fees for non-use of starts in case of cancellation or overbooking only when they are returned to the permit pool more than 15 days prior to the trip start date.
10. Rain checks will be available to individual SRP holders who have reserved a wilderness permit and decided not to use their individual SRP due to adverse weather and ocean conditions where the National Weather Service has issued a weather warning or watch for the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area. Rain checks will be valid for one year from the time of issue and require King Range NCA Manager approval.
11. Dogs (that are under owners’ control at all times) will be allowed with no fee.

12. Stock animal limits are defined in the King Range WMP. Maximum party size is “25 heartbeats” (people/stock combination) and 15 people per group. There will be no fees for stock use.
13. Wilderness permitted nights will count towards the 14-day cumulative limit for camping on all lands within the Arcata Field Office, including the King Range NCA, within a one year span.

### **C. Expanded Amenity Fee for King Range NCA Campgrounds**

An expanded amenity fee will be imposed for overnight use of all campsites at any of the six developed campgrounds (Wailaki, Nadelos, Horse Mountain, Tolkan, Honeydew Creek, and Mattole) in the King Range NCA.

This is a modification of an existing amenity fee site/area schedule. Currently a fee of \$8 per site per night is charged for overnight use at any campsites within King Range NCA’s developed campgrounds. Fees are currently collected under the “honor system” whereby individuals use an envelope to deposit payment in a secure bin (iron ranger). Fees are regularly collected from the iron ranger by BLM law enforcement, and occupied campsites checked for fee compliance.

A new fee rate of \$15 per site per night fee will be imposed for overnight use of campsites. BLM will continue to collect campground fees (Table 3.2). The BLM will implement this new fee structure for developed overnight campsite use by Labor Day weekend 2013. The Nadelos Campground group rental rate will remain at \$85 per night.

**Table 3.2** Fee schedule

King Range NCA	Existing Fee:	Proposed Fee:
Developed Campgrounds	\$8/per site/per night	\$15/per site/per night

### **D. Business Rules for the Expanded Amenity Fee Areas**

In addition to the proposed fee schedule, the following business rule (code of conduct) will advance through the federal register process and will be implemented:

1. Dogs (that are under owners’ control at all times) and stock will be allowed at no additional fee.

## IV. Planning Decisions Affecting the Proposed Fee Schedules

### A. Decisions Affecting the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area

The BLM recognized the need to consider regulating overnight use in the King Range NCA to protect wilderness character in the development of the King Range NCA RMP in 2005. The RMP directed BLM to establish visitor capacities in the Backcountry Area to manage for solitude and to reduce crowding. In 2006, the BLM began to require all overnight visitors in the King Range Backcountry Area to self-register with a backcountry permit, made available at all of the King Range NCA trailheads and at the project office.

The King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area offer visitors an opportunity to explore a wild and dramatic landscape of coastline and mountains. The BLM has been working to protect the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation. Through the King Range WMP process, the BLM refined many actions that would help to achieve wilderness visitor access goals and maintain and improve wilderness character. (See Appendix A for a list of Visitor Access Actions from the King Range WMP). The 2005 King Range NCA RMP and King Range WMP seek to maintain opportunities for solitude by managing visitation and overnight visitor use patterns primarily through off-site actions.

Visitor use in the King Range Wilderness has risen steadily since its wilderness designation in 2006, with the most notable peaks occurring around spring and summer weekends and holidays. The proposed daily entry limit of 60 people was developed through analysis of campsite capacities for various visitor use zones within the wilderness (Figure 4.1). In combination with other actions, managing the total visitor load will maintain opportunities for solitude at most overnight locations and meet the intent of the Wilderness Act, as well as direction in the 2005 King Range NCA RMP to establish capacities to manage for solitude and reduce crowding. Establishing a 30 person daily entry for September 16th to May 14th will still allow for growth in visitation during the off-peak season, while maintaining opportunities for solitude, which are greatest during these times.

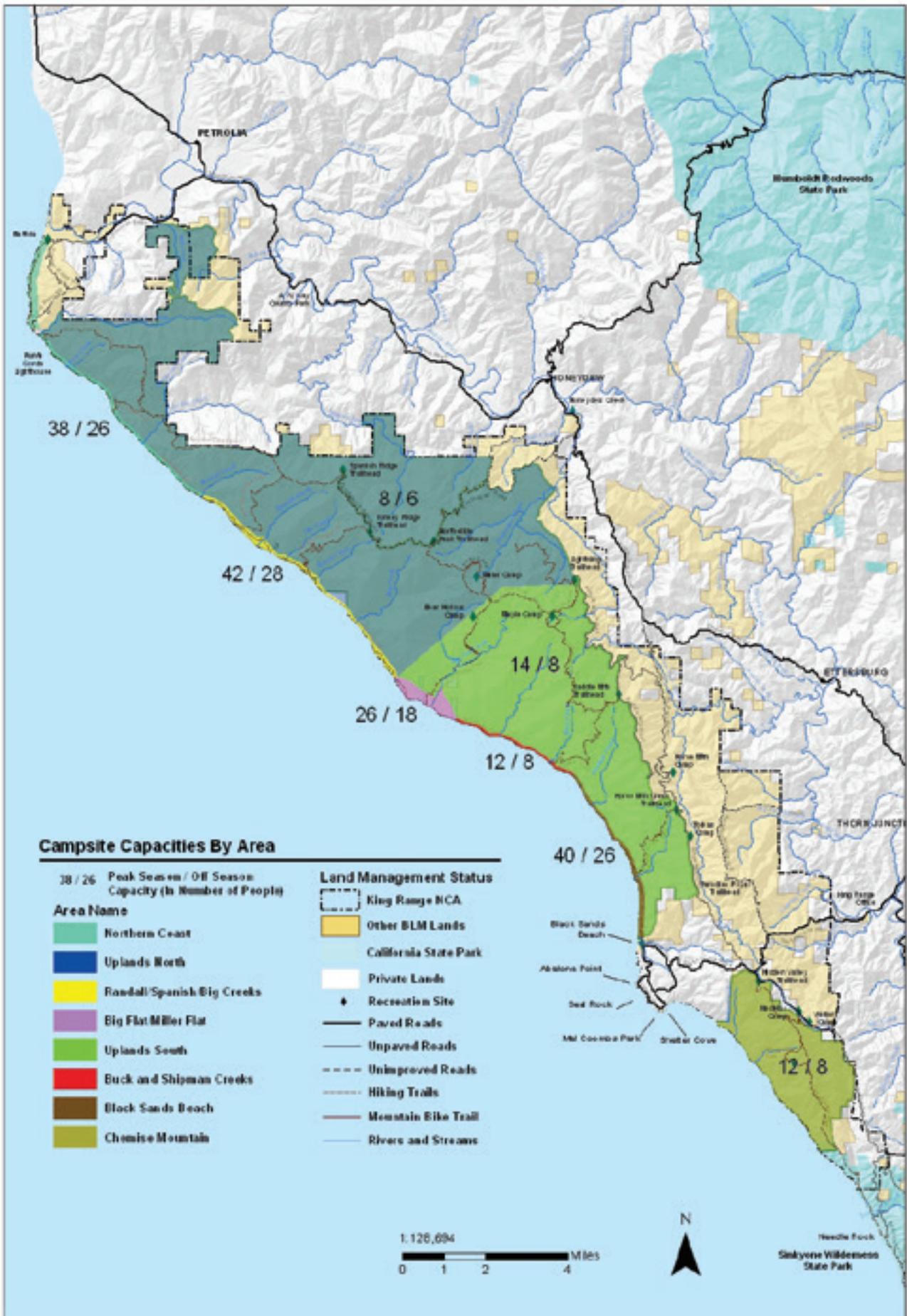


Figure 4.1 Campsite capacities by area map from the King Range WMP

By providing different seasonal capacity levels, visitors can choose to access the area when they can expect different levels of use/encounters with other parties. Although the target of 60 starts per day (and 192 people at one time) during the peak season may seem limited in an area with over 80 miles of trails, 80 percent of visitor use is concentrated along 1,200 acres that comprise the northern coastal section of the Lost Coast Trail.

## **B. Decisions Affecting the King Range NCA Campgrounds**

The newly proposed fee schedule for King Range NCA campground use is commensurate with the level of services and fee rates at comparable public land management agency campgrounds in the Northern California coastal area. In 2011 there were over 22,400 visits to the six campgrounds. Campground use in the King Range NCA has remained steady for the last several years. Fees for campground use have also remained steady; the current campground fee schedule of \$8 per site per night has been in place since 1993. The level of service (maintaining improved facilities – vault toilets, potable water, picnic tables, fire rings; providing law enforcement and garbage removal) that the BLM provides to each campground has remained constant and some have been improved in recent years (i.e., the addition of potable water now available at Tolkan Campground). However, the cost of providing these services exceeds the revenue collected from campground fees.

The BLM has identified several management actions to improve and expand visitor services and outdoor opportunity in the front country including the six campgrounds. Some of these actions include upgrading Horse Mountain Creek Campground to meet universal accessibility standards and to connect this campground to the Paradise Royale mountain bike trail system. The BLM seeks to continue to offer a high level of service and to make it more sustainable by increasing the expanded amenity campground fee schedule.

## V. Visitor Demographics & Recreation Use Studies

### A. Introduction

BLM has collected King Range NCA visitor demographics and recreation use data through recreation and visitor use surveys, special recreation and backcountry permits, fee collections, and recorded observations by BLM staff. Most data collection and analysis has focused on wilderness and backcountry users of the Lost Coast Trail. According to the data, the visitor base for the King Range NCA is primarily non-locals, with many visitors coming from the Sacramento Valley and the San Francisco Bay area. Backpacking and day hikes along the rugged coastline are the most common recreation activities within the wilderness. Stock trips, sightseeing, big game and upland bird hunting, wildlife observation, abalone diving, surf fishing, and tide pooling also occur in the area.

In 1973 BLM staff estimated 1,000 visitor days on the Lost Coast Trail and 65,000 total visitor days (a visit by one person for 12 or more hours). By 1986, BLM estimated use of the Lost Coast Trail had increased to 3,200 visitor days (320 percent increase since 1973), and by 1996 use numbers were estimated at 14,000 visitor days (437 percent increase since 1986). In 2001 Lost Coast Trail use was an estimated 17,000 visitor days. In 2006 BLM implemented a mandatory free use permit system for overnight backcountry use for resource protection, also which yielded more accurate use data.

### B. Visitor Studies

The following conclusions about visitors to the Lost Coast Trail are based on visitor studies conducted and reported by Humboldt State University (HSU) in 1997 and 2003 (Martin and Widner 1998; Martin and Harris 2004). The studies focused on users of the Lost Coast Trail.

Responses and analysis are reported below from the 1997 (sample size 308) and 2003 (sample size: 261–283) Lost Coast Trail visitor studies. In the 1997 and 2003 studies HSU addressed the issue of visitor management somewhat differently. In the HSU 1997 survey respondents were asked questions about use limits and the willingness (and amount) to pay for that use. In the HSU 2003 survey respondents answered

questions on use limits and the willingness (and amount) to pay for access to the Lost Coast Trail.

Some of the key findings of the studies included:

- For users the opportunity to enjoy the sights, sounds, and smells of nature is the most important motivation for visiting the Lost Coast Trail. Nearly 90 percent of respondents stated that the opportunity was very important and another 8.5 percent stated that it was moderately important.
- Solitude was also an important motivation for visiting the area. Nearly 90 percent of survey respondents stated that solitude was at least moderately important, with 52 percent stated that solitude was very important.
- Other important motivations for visiting the area include the opportunity to reduce tension, to feel free from society's restrictions, and to exercise and keep physically fit.

The HSU studies analyzed the ability of visitors to achieve desired outcomes during their time on the Lost Coast Trail. Researchers gauged visitor satisfaction levels by comparing the perceived ability of visitors to achieve a particular outcome (such as achieving solitude) during their visit with the importance of that outcome to visitors. The results showed that some visitors had a greater desire to experience solitude and the natural environment than they were able to achieve during their time on the Lost Coast Trail.

The researchers compared the data from the 2003 survey with data from the 1997 survey to gauge trends in visitor perceptions and expectations. In 1997, 51 percent of visitors were able to achieve solitude, compared with only 34 percent in 2003. While still a minority, an increasing number of visitors in the 2003 study identified crowding and increased use as an impediment to achieving solitude. In 2003, 29 percent of survey respondents said that there were too many other groups camped within sight or sound of their group, up from 20 percent in 1997. Despite the importance of recreating in an unconfined and unrestricted manner, 55 percent of respondents supported implementing group size limits in 2003, up from 49 percent in 1997. The majority of survey respondents in 2003 also supported implementing visitor capacity limits to maintain solitude.

Overall, a majority (over 83 percent) of survey respondents in 2003 indicated that maintaining solitude on the Lost Coast Trail was important enough to impose some restrictions on recreation access either

now or in the future. It should be noted that without limiting survey respondents to repeat visitors it is difficult to confidently compare visitor experiences over time given the diverse expectations of visitors. For example, as an area gets more crowded those visitors who desire higher levels of solitude will no longer be among the visiting population.

1. *HSU Final Management Report for 1997 Lost Coast Trail Backcountry Visitor Study*

Table 5.1 below compares visitor perceptions of the need to limit use to the area.

**Table 5.1** Visitors' perceptions on limiting use:

Question	Percent of respondents who answered
Yes, controls are needed to lower the current level of use	4%
Yes, controls are needed now to hold use at about the current level	24%
No, there should be no controls now or in the future on the number of people using the Lost Coast Trail	18%
No controls are needed now but should be imposed in the future if and when overuse occurs	47%
No Response	8%

HSU asked visitors if they would be willing to pay a fee to use the area if the money collected was used to protect and maintain the area. Table 5.2 indicates that about 81 percent of respondents would be willing to pay a user fee.

**Table 5.2** Visitors' willingness to pay for use of Lost Coast Trail

Question	Percent of respondents who answered
Yes	81%
No	16%
No response	3%

HSU asked visitors how much they would be willing to pay to use the area. Table 5.3 suggests that 70 percent of respondents would be willing to pay one to five dollars to use the area and the average amount was \$5.43.

**Table 5.3** Amount visitors are willing to pay to use the Lost Coast Trail

Question	Percent of respondents who answered
\$1 to \$5	79%
\$6 to \$10	17%
\$11 to \$15	1%
\$16 to \$20	2%
more than \$20	2%
<b>mean</b>	<b>\$5.43</b>

2. *HSU Final Management Report for 2003 Lost Coast Trail Backcountry Visitor Study*

Visitors' opinions on the need for use limits are summarized in Table 5.4. The HSU study found that a plurality of all wilderness visitors in 2003 were in favor of implementing use limits in the future when over-use occurs.

**Table 5.4** Response to the need for use limits

Opinions on Use Limits:	Total %
Limits are needed now to <b>lower</b> current use level	6.9%
Limits are needed now to <b>hold use</b> at current level	28.0%
No limits now or in the future	16.5%
No limits now, but should be implemented if/when overuse occurs in the future	48.7%

Table 5.5 indicates the percentage of respondents' willingness to pay for access to the Lost Coast Trail in 2003. The majority of visitors (81 percent) were willing to pay for access. A smaller percentage of locals (70 percent) than non-locals (83 percent) were willing to pay.

**Table 5.5** Willingness to pay based on local/non-local status

Willingness to Pay	Percent: Locals	Percent: Non-Locals	Percent: Overall
Willing to pay	69.6%	83.1%	80.9%
Not willing to pay	30.4%	16.9%	19.1%

Table 5.6 shows the median amounts respondents were willing to pay for access in 2003. The median per-day amount that people were willing to pay is \$5. The median per-visit amount was \$10. Non-locals (not a resident of Humboldt or Mendocino Counties) were willing to pay a higher amount per visit (\$10) than locals (\$7.50).

**Table 5.6** Amount willing to pay based on local/non-local status

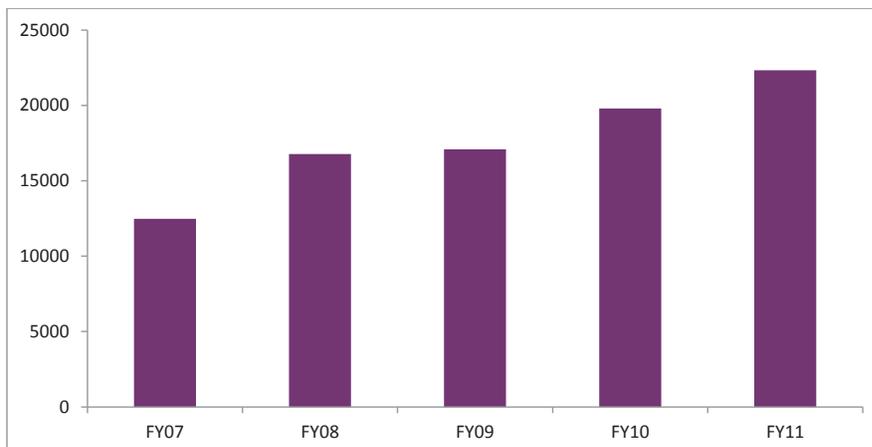
Median amount willing to pay:	Locals	Average: Non-Locals	Average: Overall
Per day	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
Per visit	\$7.50	\$10.00	\$10.00

Visitor surveys completed by HSU in 1997 and 2003 helped to demonstrate that visitors of the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area understand the need to manage overnight use and support the implementation of an allocation system and associated fee structure to limit overnight use and in turn the protection of the natural resources and the unique Lost Coast experience. Since the initial HSU survey in 1997, overnight use has more than doubled.

Overnight use is expected to increase each year as the King Range Wilderness and its backpacking opportunities are discovered and shared. BLM’s own management actions (improving signage, publications, and outreach) and its inclusion in the NLCS have and will continue to raise awareness and potentially increase visitor use in the King Range Wilderness.

### C. King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Permit Data

Since implementing a mandatory permit system for overnight backcountry visitors in 2006, the BLM has observed an increase every year in total backcountry visitor days (Figure 5.1). A 78.8 percent increase in visitor days was observed between 2007 and 2011, from 12,480 visitor days in 2007 to 22,324 visitor days in 2011. The average size of

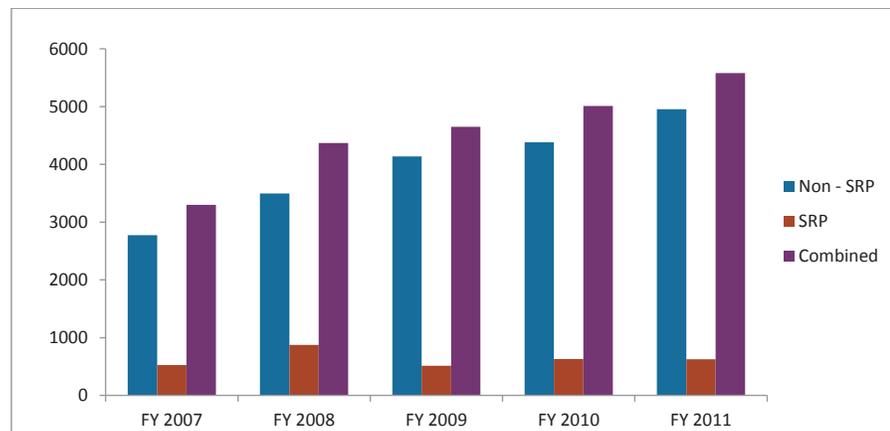


**Figure 5.1** Total number of visitor days in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area: FY 2007 to FY 2011.

private parties as analyzed from self-reported backcountry permit data appears to have remained relatively constant in size, with an average of 2.7 individuals in 2006, and 2.6 individuals in 2010.

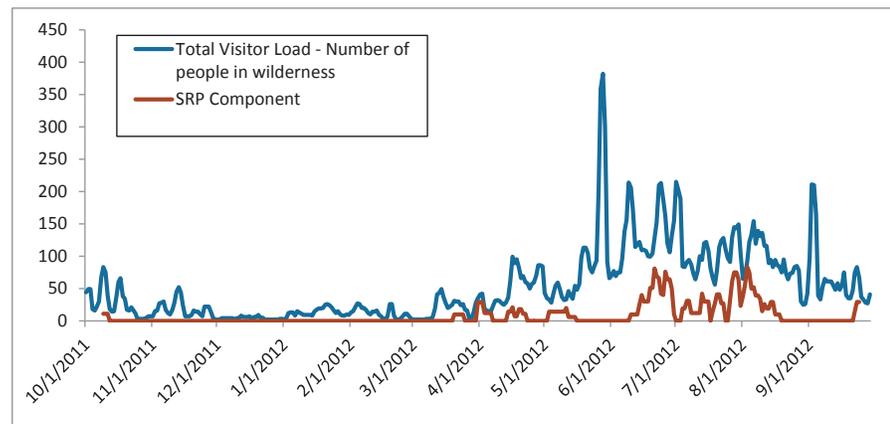
Since 2006, the average length of a backcountry visit has been approximately 3.5 days, though this has shown a slight upward trend (USDI unpublished data). Figure 5.2 displays the total number of overnight backcountry individuals (Non-SRP), permitted commercial and organized group SRPs and the combined total of all overnight use in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area between Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 and FY 2011. Actual use is approximately 10–15 percent higher than indicated by these figures, based on the observed level of permit non-compliance and the fact that permits are not required for day use.

**Figure 5.2** Total number of registered users who spent at least one night in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area by fiscal year.



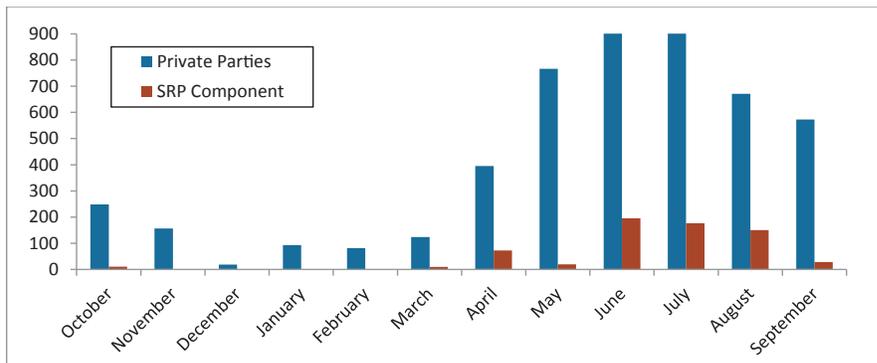
The King Range NCA currently manages commercial and organized groups through BLM’s SRP Regulations (43 CFR 2930). Currently commercial SRP groups pay fees at 3 percent of gross profits while organized group SRP fees are \$5 per person per day. The King Range NCA manages approximately 40 SRPs each year authorizing backpacking use on the Lost Coast Trail. Figure 5.3 compares the total visitor load (estimate of total number of people in the King Range Wilderness at any one time) and the SRP component of that total load in FY 2011.

**Figure 5.3** Estimated visitor load in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area on a given day.



This number is reached by analyzing the start date, end date, and party size for backcountry permits and proportion under commercial and organized group SRP, October 2011 to September 2012.

The majority of visitation in the King Range Wilderness occurs during the summer season, with the highest level of use occurring on holiday weekends. Memorial Day weekend is the busiest single weekend for individual backcountry users; visitor loads during this weekend sometimes reach as high as 375, more than five times the average daily load during the peak season. Increased backcountry use during college spring break time periods is a newly identified trend. Figure 5.4 shows the total number of individuals and individuals who were authorized under a SRP (commercial and organized group) for each month in FY 2011. The popularity of the wilderness in spring and early summer is likely due to the inaccessibility of many alpine wilderness areas in Northern California during this time of year. Visitation to the King Range Wilderness can be significantly influenced by snow levels in regional alpine wilderness areas during the winter, spring, and early summer, and by wildfire conditions in summer and fall.

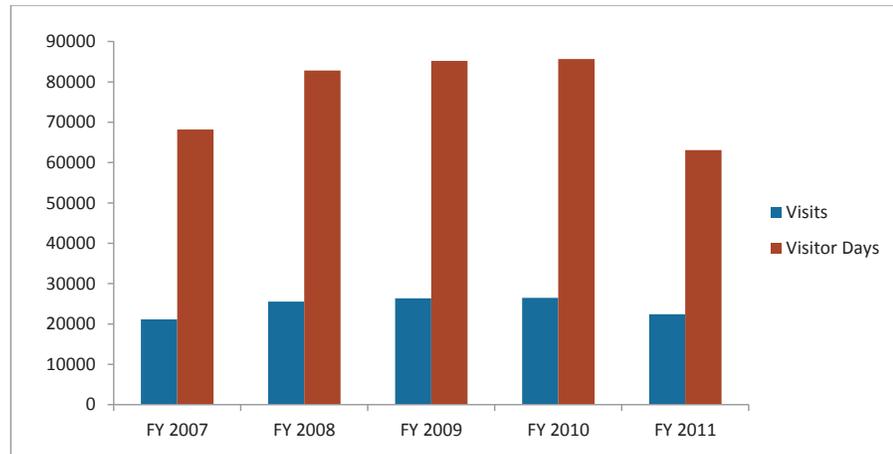


**Figure 5.4** Comparison of private parties and SRP holders by month in FY 2011.

#### D. King Range NCA Campground Permit Data

Information about campground visitor use is primarily reported to the BLM through the collection of fee envelopes, but also staff observations and visitor comments. No comprehensive visitor study has been conducted on King Range NCA campground users. Visitors to King Range NCA campgrounds come from a diverse array of backgrounds and locations. Most campground users are local, from the greater California North Coast area, or from the San Francisco Bay area. Users may exclusively use the facilities at specific campgrounds, but many use the campgrounds to branch out and use other King Range NCA facilities (hiking & biking trails) or visit other local attractions like Shelter Cove and Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. Figure 5.5 displays visits and visitor day totals from FY 2007 through FY 2011.

**Figure 5.5** Total combined number of visits and visitor days in King Range NCA developed campgrounds.



## VI. Financial Analysis

### A. King Range NCA Funding, Revenue, and Expenditures

The King Range NCA receives an annual operating budget through the federal appropriations process. The King Range NCA has been assigned an organizational code and appropriated base funding specifically for on-the-ground operations and management activities. Funding received is directed to several “functional areas” which are in turn intended for specific management applications. The King Range NCA’s base funding comes in two functional areas; L1210 – Wilderness Management, and L1711 – National Conservation Areas/National Monuments.

Funds received specifically for wilderness management have remained more or less constant at \$115,000 annually since 2002. Funds received in the L1711 functional area have varied from year to year, from a high of \$665,000 in FY 2003 to a low of \$479,000 in FY 2012. Funding in the L1711 functional area declined \$127,000 from 2010 to 2012 to a level that is \$94,300 less than the 10 year average, or a decline of 16.4%. Table 6.1 depicts these funding levels from 2003 through 2012. This plan only details King Range expenditures regarding wilderness/backcountry and campground operations and management programs. Other King Range NCA program expenditures include: operations and

**Table 6.1** King Range NCA base funding, FY 2003–2012

King Range NCA Base Funding Levels ( \$ 000's)			
Fiscal Year	Wilderness Management	National Conservation Area Management	Total Base Funding
2003	115	665	780
2004	115	568	683
2005	115	568	683
2006	115	582	697
2007	115	582	697
2008	115	567	682
2009	110	582	692
2010	115	606	721
2011	115	534	649
2012	115	479	594

maintenance of administrative facilities, public road system, coastal access sites, public restrooms, and group use area; the Paradise Royale Mountain Bike Trail System; delivery of youth employment and education programs; range management; invasive species control; NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act), ESA (Endangered Species Act), and other regulatory compliance; administration; environmental restoration and are not discussed in this plan.

As a Fee Demonstration Site, and under FLREA, recreation use fees collected in King Range campgrounds, and SRP fees collected from commercial and organized groups have been locally retained and have funded operations, maintenance, repairs, facilities, and services in the King Range NCA. Table 6.2 depicts fees collected in FY 2009–2012.

**Table 6.2** Fee collections FY 2009–2012

Fee Collections 2009–2012				
Fiscal Year	2009	2010	2011	2012
Recreation Use Fees	20,232.53	26,999.61	23,934.27	23,431.44
Commercial SRP	3,305.25	5,773.75	9,421.28	7,603.78
Organized Group SRP	835.00	1,984.69	2,735.15	1,935.00
Total Fees Collected	24,372.78	34,758.05	36,090.70	32,970.22

**Table 6.3** Fee expenditures FY 2009–2012

Fee Revenue (L1232) Expenditures 2009–2012				
Fiscal Year	2009	2010	2011	2012
Interpretive and Visitor Services	3,443.04	2,221.08	2,309.18	164.55
Janitorial Services	-	42,496.00	64,350.00	32,800.00
Janitorial Supplies	1,689.37	3,297.19	-	-
Fee Collection	58.75	-	-	-
Total Annual Fee Expenditure	5,191.16	48,014.27	66,659.18	32,964.55

Table 6.3 depicts expenditures of fees collected in FY 2009–2012. These expenditures are in addition to those shown in the following labor and operations tables for wilderness management and campground management below (Functional Areas L1210 and L1711).

## B. Projected Costs of Wilderness Permit Program

### 1. Actual Labor and Operations Costs FY 2009 to FY 2012

Data displayed in Table 6.4 is from BLM's Financial Business Management System (FBMS) and reflect how costs are apportioned among various management activities. Labor costs reflect wages and benefits for employees performing specific functions. Operation costs include purchases of supplies and materials, vehicles, rentals, and services. Costs in the table below depict costs associated with wilderness management funded by BLM Functional Areas L1210 – Wilderness Management, and L1711 – NCA Management.

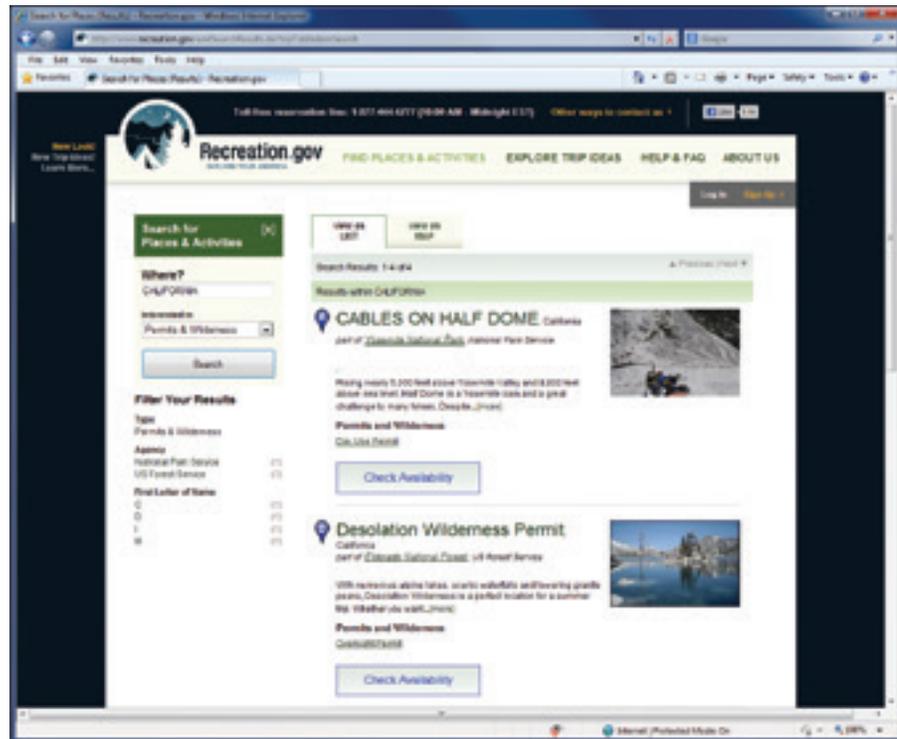
**Table 6.4** Labor and operations costs for the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area and King Range NCA – All Other Programs

L1210 / L1711 Labor and Operations Costs FY 2009–2012 King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area Management					
Program Description	Labor/Ops	Fiscal Year			
		2009	2010	2011	2012
Visitor Services, Interpretation	Labor	60,177	42,620	79,457	66,307
	Operations	-	-	-	-
SRP Administration	Labor	7,533	13,973	16,967	20,475
	Operations	-	-	-	903
Backcountry Patrol, Permit Management and Law Enforcement	Labor	30,830	30,108	63,021	94,899
	Operations	3,614	6,277	2,365	2,078
Wilderness Trail Maintenance	Labor	18,728	2,648	19,273	13,147
	Operations	464	341	-	-
Wilderness Monitoring	Labor	53,700	54,542	39,650	31,253
	Operations	11,043	9,020	8,117	8,331
King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area Management Total by Year		186,089	159,529	228,850	237,393
King Range NCA - All Other Programs	Labor/Operations	155,333	364,348	204,592	198,461

### 2. Implementation Expenses

Costs to implement the National Reservation System at Recreation.gov will be minimal. There are no costs to the BLM to set up a custom page on Recreation.gov or to maintain the reservation system. Recreation.gov collects fees from customers who reserve trips through their system (Figure 6.1).

**Figure 6.1** Sample screenshot of Recreation.gov



Reservation fees collected by Recreation.gov depend on the method the customer uses to make the reservation. Recreation.gov charges a customer a \$6.50 fee for a reservation made through their call-in center, \$4.50 for reservations made online and \$2.00 if BLM staff enters a reservation (or same day entry) at one of its respective offices. The BLM will collect a use fee of \$5 per person per day. Table 6.5 displays the overnight wilderness use fee structure, processing fees charged by Recreation.gov.

**Table 6.5** Wilderness Permit Program fee structure

King Range NCA— Reservation Type	Call In	Online	BLM enters
Overnight - Wilderness Trip Fee	\$5/person/day	\$5/person/day	\$5/person/day
Recreation.gov Processing Fee	\$6.50	\$4.50	\$2.00

BLM will incur some costs with the implementation of a new fee for overnight use of the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area. The BLM will have labor costs associated with training staff on the new system and performing community outreach to educate the public on the new fee structure. New facility and other maintenance expenses are estimated to be at \$1,800. Nine trailheads will require new signage and the removal of facilities associated with the self-issue permit system.

### 3. King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Revenue FY 2006–2011

Currently there are no fees collected from individual SRPs for wilderness and backcountry area overnight use in the King Range NCA.

### 4. King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Anticipated Individual SRP Revenue with Implementation of the New Fee Schedule

It's difficult to determine the exact amount of fee dollars the BLM will collect by implementing a new fee structure for overnight wilderness use. This analysis will provide a range of the potential revenue from this new fee structure. Table 6.6 displays the total number of wilderness permits issued by BLM from 2006 to 2011.

**Table 6.6** King Range NCA - backcountry permits collected

Fiscal Year	Number of backcountry permits collected
FY 2006 ** Started on 5/20/2006	672
FY 2007	1031
FY 2008	1328
FY 2009	1570
FY 2010	1768
FY 2011	1784

The BLM anticipates a continued increase in overnight wilderness permits issued each year in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area. The BLM estimates that as many as 1,790 wilderness and backcountry permits could be issued in FY 2013 with 22,350 user days (slight increases from 2011 figures). Using these FY 2013 estimates, the BLM anticipates revenue of \$111,750 from individual SRP fees.

The 5-year average (2007–2011) for overnight wilderness permits issued by the King Range NCA is 1,492 permits and 17,465 visitor days per year. Using the 5-year visitor day average, the BLM anticipates revenue from \$87,325 individual SRP fees.

## C. Projected Changes to King Range NCA Campground Revenue

BLM collects fees at the six developed campgrounds in the King Range NCA. As a security measure campground fees are collected by the law enforcement officer and processed by the administrative staff in the Arcata Field Office. Costs associated with collecting fees include: staff

time, fuel and vehicle, envelopes, signage, and maintenance to the self-service fee stations.

Significant resources are dedicated to the maintenance of campground facilities, such as maintaining and replacing picnic tables, fire rings, cleaning and servicing bathrooms, providing potable water, garbage pickup and disposal, and vegetation treatments. During the high use season from May to October, garbage pickup and the restroom cleaning at the campgrounds is performed by a contractor.

1. Actual Labor and Operations Costs FY 2009 to FY 2012

Data displayed in Table 6.7 are from BLM’s Financial Business Management System (FBMS) reflects cost apportioned among various management activities defined on a BLM-wide basis. Labor costs reflect wages and benefits for employees performing specific functions. Operational costs include purchases of supplies and materials, vehicles, rentals, and services. The table below depicts costs associated with campground and recreation site management funded by BLM Functional Area L1711 – NCA Management. They do not include costs funded by fee revenue collected under FLREA.

**Table 6.7** King Range NCA developed campground management costs

L1711 Labor and Operations Costs FY 2009-2012 King Range Campground					
Program Description	Labor/Ops	Fiscal Year			
		2009	2010	2011	2012
Visitor Services, Interpretation	Labor	15,044	10,655	19,864	16,577
	Operations	22,490	44,157	12,068	6,994
Campground Permit Administration	Labor	24,312	2,468	3,419	29,432
	Operations	3,010	-	-	114
Campground Building Maintenance	Labor	3,736	9,591	2,387	3,699
	Operations	8,545	6,250	3,429	7,278
Campground Non-Building Maintenance	Labor	73,285	22,653	47,951	30,563
	Operations	46,250	21,538	39,814	17,182
Law Enforcement	Labor	104,594	103,753	111,864	67,388
	Operations	13,684	11,816	10,849	11,889
Campground Operations and Maintenance Total by Year		314,950	232,881	251,645	191,116

## 2. Implementation Expenses

The BLM does not anticipate any new additional costs associated with collecting and processing fees as a result of the implementation of the new and expanded fee schedule. However, some costs to collect fees will rise over time as labor and vehicle expenses rise. The BLM will also incur costs to educate and inform visitors of the new fee structure. The time spent in this effort will be minimal and will focus on key messages to visitors of the King Range NCA with each opportunity to engage the public.

## 3. King Range NCA Campground Revenue FY 2006–2011

The King Range NCA campgrounds fee schedule has been in place since 1993. Below Table 6.8 displays the current fee schedule and the fees collected by BLM at each campground and the annual total from FY 2006 to FY 2011.

**Table 6.8** Current fee schedule and revenue for developed campgrounds in the King Range NCA

King Range NCA —Campgrounds	Current Fee	FY 2006 Fees Collected	FY 2007 Fees Collected	FY 2008 Fees Collected	FY 2009 Fees Collected	FY 2010 Fees Collected	FY 2011 Fees Collected
Honeydew Campground	\$8	\$697	\$997	\$421	\$1013	\$1084	\$995
Horse Mountain Campground	\$5	\$1021	\$387	\$176	\$268	\$237	\$146
Mattole Campground	\$8	\$6825	\$7846	\$8363	\$7491	\$10068	\$9534
Tolkan Campground	\$8	\$177	\$1298	\$817	\$2027	\$3093	\$2980
Nadelos Campground	\$8	\$937	\$1390	\$1744	\$1044	\$1939	\$1444
Wailaki Campground	\$8	\$2551	\$3317	\$3374	\$4010	\$5278	\$3729
<b>Total by year</b>	-	<b>\$12,208</b>	<b>\$15,235</b>	<b>\$14,895</b>	<b>\$15,853</b>	<b>\$21,700</b>	<b>\$18,829</b>

From FY 2009 to 2012 the BLM spent an average of \$247,648 annually to manage campground operations in the King Range NCA and collected an average of \$18,749 in fees in support of that management. The BLM has collected approximately 7.5 percent of actual costs during this four year period.

#### 4. King Range NCA Anticipated Campground Revenue with Implementation of the Expanded Fee Schedule

This analysis estimates the projected annual fees to be collected at each of the six campgrounds. Projected campground fee collections were calculated by taking the average number of envelopes collected (campsites utilized) and fees paid at each campground and reported in BLM's Recreation Management Information System from 2006 to 2011. That average was multiplied by the proposed fee amount to derive the annual projected fee collection. Table 6.9 displays the projected fee collection for King Range NCA campgrounds.

**Table 6.9** Projected revenue with proposed fee amounts

<b>King Range NCA —Campgrounds</b>	<b>Proposed Expanded Amenity Fee</b>	<b>Annual Projected Fee Collections</b>
Honeydew Campground	\$15	\$1,620
Horse Mountain Campground	\$15	\$1,065
Mattole Campground	\$15	\$15,660
Tolkan Campground	\$15	\$3,240
Nadelos Campground	\$15	\$2,655
Wailaki Campground	\$15	\$6,945
<b>Annual Projected Fee Collection Total</b>	-	<b>\$31,185</b>

BLM anticipates recovering up to 12.5 percent of actual costs to operate the developed campgrounds. BLM may but does not anticipate collecting a lesser amount of campground revenue if users in the future decide not to utilize the developed campgrounds due to fee increases.

The BLM does not anticipate significant additional costs with the implementation of a new campground fee structure. There will be some minor costs. Each campground will require new signage and kiosks will need updating. New facility costs are estimated to be at \$300 per campground including material and labor costs, therefore \$1,800 in new funding will be required to properly sign all six campgrounds.

## VII. Fair Market Value Assessment

### A. Introduction

This analysis uses a fair market value approach to help determine appropriate fee amounts for the newly proposed individual SRP (for overnight wilderness and backcountry use) and the expanded amenity developed campground fee schedule. In developing this fee schedule, individual public land units managed by BLM, National Park Service, US Forest Service, California State Parks, and Humboldt County Parks were researched. These units include parks, reserves, and wilderness areas and have several qualities that are helpful in the analysis and relate in some way to the King Range NCA. These qualities include the location of the unit in relation to the King Range NCA, units that have special designations, units that offer coastal backpacking, and other BLM managed units that collect fees for overnight wilderness visitor use.

### B. Comparable Fee Schedules to the Proposed Wilderness Permit Program

Organized groups (Boy Scouts, Sierra Club) and commercial operators are required to obtain an Organized Group or Commercial SRP respectively and pay a permit fee. Currently the BLM charges \$5 per person per day for organized group and commercial college and university trips in the King Range NCA Wilderness & Backcountry. All other Commercial SRP trips are required to pay a permit fee that equals 3 percent of gross revenue. Commercial SRP operators pay on average a \$4-\$5 per client per day fee for their use.

Table 7.1 details day and overnight fee schedules for various coastal, backcountry, and/or wilderness public land units across California and in Arizona, Utah, and Washington. Units are managed by BLM, National Park Service (NPS), US Forest Service (USFS), and California State Parks. No one unit compares equally to the King Range NCA in terms of the experience that visitors seek and find, but these seventeen other units help understand the value of an overnight trip in a wilderness and/or coastal setting.

**Table 7.1** Backcountry-Wilderness Areas-Coastal Public Lands—  
Permit Fee Matrix

Backcountry - Wilderness Areas- Coastal Public Lands - Permit Fee Matrix					
Area	Agency	State	On Season Permit Fee	Off Season Permit Fee	Other Fees
Cedar Mesa Backcountry	BLM	UT	\$8/person/day	\$5/per person/ per day	
Paria Canyon - Vermillion Cliffs National Mounment	BLM	AZ	\$5/person/day	N/A	\$5/dog/day, \$30 reservation change
Coyote Buttes North - Vermillion Cliffs National Monument	BLM	AZ	\$7/person/day	N/A	\$7/dog/day, \$30 reservation change
Coyote Buttes South - Vermillion Cliffs National Monument	BLM	AZ	\$5/person/day	N/A	\$5/dog/day, \$30 reservation change
Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness	BLM	AZ	\$5/person/day	N/A	
Point Reyes National Seashore - Backcountry	NPS	CA	\$15/site/nite (1-6 persons)	N/A	
			\$30/site/night (7-14 persons)		
			\$40/site/night for (15-25 persons)		
Redwood National Park - Backcountry	NPS	CA	3 backcountry sites - free permit	N/A	
			2 backcountry sites - \$5/person/day		
Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Park	NPS	CA	\$15/wilderness camping fee	Permit/No fee	
Oylympic National Park - Wilderness Camping	NPS	WA	\$5 registration fee + \$2/person/night	N/A	
Zion National Park - Subway & Mystery Canyon	NPS	UT	\$5/wilderness group	N/A	\$5/lottery fee
Humboldt Redwoods State Park	CA State Park	CA	\$5/site/night (tail camp)	N/A	
Sinkyone Wilderness State Park	CA State Parks	CA	\$5/site/night (trail camp)	N/A	\$6 entrance/ parking fee
Big Basin Redwoods State Park	CA State Parks	CA	\$15/site/night (trail camp)	N/A	\$8/reservation fee, \$10/extra vehicle fee
Inyo National Forest Wilderness	USFS	CA	\$5/person	Permit/No fee	\$6/transac- tion fee/online reservations
Mount Shasta Wilderness - Shasta-Trinity National Forest	USFS	CA	\$20/per person/3 days - above 10,000 ft	N/A	\$30 annual pass
Desolation Wilderness - Eldorado National Forest	USFS	CA	\$5/person/1 night	N/A	\$6/reservation fee, \$6/reserva- tion change
			\$10/person/2-14 nights		
Enchantment - Alpine Lakes Wilderness - Mt Baker - Snoqualmie National Forest	USFS	WA	\$5/person/day	Permit/No fee	\$6/reservation fee

### C. Comparison of King Range NCA Campground Fees to Other Regional and Federal Campgrounds

Table 7.2 below displays information on campgrounds throughout Northern California and beyond the Redwood Coast. The campgrounds in the table are developed and offer standard amenities like picnic tables, fire rings, parking, restrooms, and potable water. Humboldt County has five campgrounds that charge \$20 per site per night. The National Park Service operates campgrounds at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, Lava Beds National Monument, and Lassen Volcanic National Park and fees are \$10–18 per site per night. California State Parks operates many campgrounds along the north coast. Six selected California State Park/Recreation Area campground fees range from \$25–35 per site per night. The US Forest Service operates many campgrounds with a wide range of developments in the Six Rivers National Forest. Campgrounds located within the Smith River National Recreation Area are similar in development and services provided at the King Range NCA campgrounds and charge \$8 per site plus \$5 for extra vehicles.

**Table 7.2** Redwood Coast Region – Developed Campground Fee Matrix

<b>Redwood Coast Region - Developed Campground Fee Matrix</b>			
Area - Campground	Agency	State	Fees
A. W. Way County Park	Humboldt County	CA	\$20/site/night
Big Lagoon County Park	Humboldt County	CA	\$20/site/night
Clam Beach County Park	Humboldt County	CA	\$20/site/night
Samoa Boat Ramp County Park	Humboldt County	CA	\$20/site/night
Van Duzen: Swimmers Delight County Park	Humboldt County	CA	\$20/site/night
Whiskeytown NRA - 6 primitive campgrounds	NPS	CA	\$10/site/night
Lava Beds National Monument	NPS	CA	\$10/site/night
Lassen Volcanic National Park	NPS	CA	\$10-\$18/site/night
Benbow Lake State Recreation Area	CA State Parks	CA	\$35/site/night
Grizzly Creek Redwoods State Park	CA State Parks	CA	\$35/site/night
Humboldt Redwoods State Park	CA State Parks	CA	\$35/site/night
Richardson Grove State Park	CA State Parks	CA	\$35/site/night
Sinkyone Wilderness State Park	CA State Parks	CA	\$25/site/night
Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area	CA State Parks	CA	\$35/site/night
Smith River National Recreation Area	USFS	CA	\$8/site/night + \$5 extra vehicle charge

## VIII. Rationale for New Fees and Expanded Fee Schedules

### A. Wilderness Permit Program Benefits

Implementing an overnight wilderness and backcountry individual SRP fee will provide for improved visitor experience and resource protection by having BLM recover costs associated with managing the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area. New fee monies will assist BLM with project labor and operational costs for specific wilderness management actions (wilderness ranger patrols, monitoring, restoration, trails and campsite maintenance) and management actions that occur outside of wilderness (trailheads, websites, and brochures).

If the proposed SRP fee schedule is not implemented concurrently with the individual SRP requirement for overnight King Range Wilderness and Backcountry use the BLM will not be able to successfully meet the objectives of the Wilderness Permit Program and actively manage visitor use to the extent the BLM has recognized is necessary to protect the qualities of wilderness character as required by the Wilderness Act, Federal regulation, and BLM policy.

### B. Implementation of Expanded Amenity Fee for King Range NCA Campgrounds

Consequences for not implementing the proposed expanded amenity fee schedule include an increase in the number of deferred maintenance projects at King Range NCA campgrounds. Other consequences range from limiting garbage collection services and potable water deliveries seasonally and/or at certain campgrounds to seasonal and/or permanent campground closures.

Fees collected at King Range NCA campsites currently do not equal the expense for campground maintenance. Currently, BLM collects an average of \$16,453, or 7.5% of the actual costs required for King Range NCA campground operations from the existing \$8 fee. The proposed fee increase to \$15 is expected to generate \$31,185 in fee revenue, based on historic use, or 12.5% of actual campground operating costs.

## IX. Objectives for Use of Fee Receipts

### A. King Range Wilderness & Backcountry Area Objectives

Maintaining and improving wilderness character and maintaining and enhancing the visitor's experience of the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area are the primary objectives in implementing a Wilderness Permit Program. With the implementation of the Wilderness Permit Program as defined in this plan, the BLM will have an effective tool for managing wilderness and the desired experience of wilderness for those who visit the Lost Coast. The Wilderness Permit Program will limit the number of daily entries for overnight users and in that process protects wilderness character. Wilderness character is preserved and improved by providing for solitude and greater protection of sensitive resources and sites from the impacts of human use.

The priority projects for wilderness and backcountry individual SRP fees collected are:

- Seasonal Wilderness Rangers (Figure 9.1) – Seasonal wilderness rangers/internships “boots and the ground” and their efforts will help to educate users and enhance visitor experiences, enforce regulations designed to protect natural resources and the wilderness environment.
- Trail System Maintenance – Annual trail maintenance and periodic trail re-construction projects on 80 miles of trails in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area.
- Backcountry Campsite and Spring Maintenance – Maintenance of backcountry campsites and springs. These facilities provide opportunities to experience the upland portions of the King Range Wilderness. Spring maintenance provides for visitor use and safety and helps to protect natural resources.
- Development of Hidden Valley and Mill Creek Trails – Trail construction projects in the King Range Wilderness.
- Coordination and Implementation of Marine Trash Removal – Cleanup of beaches, trail corridors, and campsites that are impacted by the accumulation of marine trash.

- Improved Visitor Signage and Information at Trailhead Kiosks – Inform visitors of changing Lost Coast Trail conditions and promote safe travel around trail obstacles.
- Improved Brochures, Websites, and Other Interpretive Materials.

**Figure 9.1** King Range NCA Wilderness Ranger assists Lost Coast Trail hikers



## B. King Range NCA Campgrounds Objectives

Maintaining and improving the condition and function of the King Range NCA campgrounds is the primary objective in expanding the campground fee schedule. With the implementation of the new fee schedule, the BLM will be able to provide the public with scenic, enjoyable, and safe developed camping experiences while making additional improvements that provide for visitor services and resource protection.

Priority projects for King Range NCA campground expanded amenity site/area fees collected are listed below:

- Continue to provide weekly janitorial service throughout the winter, bi-weekly from April–October, and thrice-weekly during summer holiday weekends at King Range NCA campgrounds.
- Expand recyclable waste collection services to King Range NCA campgrounds (Mattole and Tolkan campgrounds are the first priority).
- Maintain potable water delivery that meets Safe Drinking Water Act standards at campgrounds throughout the year.

- Develop new water sources that meet Safe Drinking Water Act standards for more reliable and efficient water delivery at Tolkan and Horse Mountain Campgrounds.
- Re-condition or replace campground amenities throughout their lifecycles – picnic tables, fire pits and grills, and restrooms.
- Improve visitor signage and interpretive kiosks in King Range NCA campgrounds.
- Continue to pay for collections, administration, and processing of fee payments.

## X. Social & Economic Impacts

### A. Introduction

This action will create economic and social impacts on wilderness and developed campground users of the King Range NCA. Impacts and perceptions of impacts will differ among the various individuals, families, and user groups who share the desire to use the King Range Wilderness, Backcountry Area and developed campgrounds. Overnight use by individuals in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area will be limited for the first time and those individuals will be required to pay a fee for that overnight use. Until now, backpackers have experienced the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area without an individual SRP fee. Developed campground users will be required to pay an increase of \$7 per site per night for a total of \$15 per site per night. That is an 87.5 percent increase from the existing fee schedule of \$8 per site per night.

### B. Impacts of the Wilderness Permit Program

Humboldt County has a higher poverty rate compared to the State of California as a whole. As of 2005 minority populations make up 15 percent of the county population compared to 50 percent for the State of California. Low income and underserved individuals may have less of an ability to pay overnight use fees to experience the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area with the implementation of a new fee schedule. It is expected that the impacts to most individuals seeking overnight use in the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area will be minimal due to the high cost and time investments already required to successfully backpack in the area. Many of these individuals are somewhat familiar and/or have personal experience with quota/lottery systems and paying a fee for overnight use in specially designated areas. It is expected that impacts to low income and underserved populations will be minimal due to transportation and equipment costs that already make a King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area overnight trip difficult to obtain, regardless of a nominal fee structure.

Other impacts will include an improved and enhanced wilderness experiences for individuals. The Wilderness Permit Program will help to foster a wilderness environment that has less human conflict,

protected resources, and has greater opportunities for solitude. Individuals may have a greater opportunity to experience the sights, sounds, and smells of nature. The Wilderness Permit Program will help the BLM manage wilderness for the long term by managing the total visitor load. Fee revenues will also help to improve trail conditions thus improving visitor access and possibly enjoyment. The Wilderness Permit Program will help to keep the unique coastal wilderness experience intact; it will help to ensure continued visitor access to the Lost Coast; and it will help BLM meet its management objectives including the intent of the Wilderness Act and direction in the King Range RMP.

Local communities and recreation service providers may also see positive impacts with the implementation of the Wilderness Permit Program. These businesses have an opportunity to engage overnight wilderness and backcountry users and in coordination with the BLM, determine high and low use periods and offer services and goods more efficiently.

### **C. Impacts of the Expanded Amenity Fee in King Range NCA Campgrounds**

With the implementation of the proposed expanded campground fee schedule, there will be an economic and social impact on low income and underserved users. An increase in expanded amenity fees may limit individuals and families from using a campground campsite or it may result in a reduction of time spent by individuals and families camping at developed King Range NCA campgrounds. However, it is not anticipated that the expanded amenity fee of \$15 per site per night will have a significant impact on developed campground use in the King Range NCA. At \$15 per site per night, the cost of using King Range NCA developed campsites is less than North Coast CA State Park and Humboldt County's fees for campsites with similar amenities.

It is anticipated that there will be positive recreation impacts to individual users, local communities, and recreation service providers with the implementation of an expanded developed campground fee schedule in the long term. Fee monies will support and may help to expand amenities offered at King Range NCA campgrounds. This helps to create a positive economic environment where users expect and find clean and safe developed campgrounds.

## XI. America the Beautiful – Federal Recreation Lands Passes

Holders of the Senior and Access America the Beautiful Pass qualify for a 50 percent reduction of the expanded amenity fee for overnight campground use in the King Range NCA. Annual, Senior, Access, and Volunteer pass holders must pay the full individual special recreation permit fee for overnight use of the King Range Wilderness and Backcountry Area.

## XII. Future Fee Increases: Individual Special Recreation Permit and Expanded Amenity Fee

The proposed individual SRP fee of \$5 per person per day is consistent with organized group SRP fees established by the BLM Director, which is updated every three years based on the Implicit Price Deflator Index, and published in the Federal Register. Future adjustments in the proposed individual SRP fee will also be consistent with changes in organized group SRP fees set by the BLM Director.

For example, if the BLM Director increases the organized group SRP fee by \$1 per person per day (due to an increase of the Implicit Price Deflator Index) then the Individual Special Recreation Permit fee for overnight Wilderness and Backcountry Area use in the King Range NCA will also increase by \$1 per person per day.

The proposed expanded amenity (developed campground) fee schedule of \$15 per site per night has been determined to be of fair market value in 2012. Future price increases to this fee schedule will occur automatically in \$5 increments tied to a 33.34 percent increase to the Consumer Price Index – All Urban Consumers from the value of the index (229,601) reported in December 2012 by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics at: <http://data.bls.gov>. A 33.34 percent increase in the December 2012 Consumer Price Index - All Urban Consumers will be a value of 76,548. Once the Consumer Price Index - All Urban Consumers reported by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics at: <http://data.bls.gov> reaches a value of 306,149 the expanded amenity (developed campground) fee schedule will increase by \$5 to a new fee of \$20 per site per night. Increases of the expanded amenity (developed campground) fee schedule in \$5 increments are preferred by the public because it is easier for individuals and families to make exact change while paying fees at campgrounds, whereas BLM has no on-site ability to make change.

This automatic increase in the fee schedule allows future fee revenue to keep in pace with inflation (and the costs to manage the fee site). Each subsequent fee schedule increase of \$5 will occur with each 33.34 percent (76,548) increase in the reported value of the December 2012 Consumer Price Index - All Urban Consumers.

## XIII. Visitor Feedback Mechanism

BLM welcomes public comment and feedback on recreation and visitor services through multiple avenues. The Arcata Field Office and King Range Project Office in Whitethorn, CA accepts visitor feedback in person, through hard copy visitor comment forms, and by email.

BLM will post notices describing the newly proposed Wilderness Permit Program and expanded campground fee schedules at facilities (campgrounds, trail heads, project office) throughout the King Range and at area businesses and government offices. In addition, the BLM will engage the public through public meetings and news releases in print, on the radio, and online. The public will be informed as to how recreation services offered by the King Range NCA are being improved and/or expanded and will be invited to share their views on how fee revenues should be spent.

## XIV. Public Participation

The public has communicated the need to protect the King Range's wilderness values by limiting visitor use for over 15 years. This Business Plan incorporates different forms of public involvement including visitor responses from public surveys (1997 and 2003 HSU Visitor Surveys) and management plan comments (King Range 2005 RMP and 2011 WMP).

In the 1997 Lost Coast Trail survey, 47 percent of visitors surveyed told the BLM to limit use in the future when overuse occurs on the Lost Coast with 28 percent of respondents wanting BLM to limit visitor use at that time. In the 2003 survey, 48 percent of visitors surveyed told the BLM to limit use in the future when overuse occurs with 35 percent of respondents wanting BLM to limit visitor use at that time. Both surveys showed that experiencing solitude on the Lost Coast was very important to visitors. BLM plans to contract again with Humboldt State University in 2014 to complete a third comprehensive visitor survey focusing on user behavior and needs in the King Range NCA wilderness and backcountry.

The Arcata Field Office received substantial public involvement in the development of the 2005 King Range RMP. The 2005 King Range RMP proposed a variety of objectives and management decisions to maintain and restore natural conditions in the King Range. This plan directed BLM to reduce crowding in the King Range backcountry, establish carrying capacities to manage for solitude, and set a fee schedule for overnight backcountry use. During the planning process much of the public recognized the need for management to protect the wilderness qualities of the King Range. Comments received directed BLM to manage the King Range for high opportunities for solitude.

The BLM continued to place a high importance on solitude and primitive recreation in the development of the King Range 2011 WMP. The BLM with community participation redefined ("backcountry permit" program is now the "wilderness permit" program) and refined (set allocation limits and use seasons; set rules for an advanced reservation system and "walk-in" reservations) backcountry and wilderness management. The public did not communicate opposition to the wilderness permit program, visitor use allocations, and other associated management actions during the development of the King Range 2011 WMP.

This Business Plan establishes a fair market value for the developed campground and overnight wilderness/backcountry use fee schedule. It further defines BLM proposed management actions and informs the public on how fees collected will be utilized.

A Federal Register Notice will be published to announce the new and expanded SRP fee proposal and this Business Plan will be available for public comment. BLM present this proposal to the NW California Resource Advisory Council and the Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (RRAC). The RRAC meeting has a public comment session. Information on the joint FS/BLM RRAC for California can be found at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r5/recreation/racs>

In addition, BLM's public outreach will include

- Posting this Business Plan to the King Range NCA's website
- Posting of public notices at King Range NCA campgrounds, trailheads, recreation sites, and the King Range Project Office and Arcata Field Office
- Publishing of news releases in local and regional print and digital media
- Soliciting comments with public notices at local businesses and outdoor retailers
- Mailing of "Comments Welcomed" postcards from King Range NCA mailing list
- Accepting public comments for 30 days via mail, email, and personal delivery until July 31, 2013

## XV. References

All permit and fee information for the Backcountry-Wilderness Areas-Coastal Public Lands Permit Fee and Redwood Coast Region Developed Campground Fee Matrix was collected from the following websites:

*Recreation.gov*

<http://www.recreation.gov/unifSearchResults.do?topTabIndex=Search>  
(Desolation, Inyo NF Wilderness)

*National Park Service*

Redwood National Park:

<http://www.nps.gov/redw/planyourvisit/backcountry.htm>

Point Reyes National Seashore:

<http://www.nps.gov/pore/planyourvisit/camping.htm>

Olympic National Park:

<http://www.nps.gov/olym/planyourvisit/wilderness-permits.htm>

Lassen National Park:

[http://www.nps.gov/lavo/planyourvisit/camping\\_in\\_campgrounds.htm](http://www.nps.gov/lavo/planyourvisit/camping_in_campgrounds.htm)

Whiskeytown National Recreation Area:

<http://www.nps.gov/whis/planyourvisit/whiskeytown-camping.htm>

Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park:

[http://www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/wilderness\\_permits.htm](http://www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/wilderness_permits.htm)

Zion National Park:

<http://www.nps.gov/zion/planyourvisit/thesubway.htm>

*US Forest Service*

Six Rivers National Forest (Smith River National Recreation Area):

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/srnf/recreation/camping-cabins>

Shasta-Trinity National Forest (Mt Shasta Wilderness Area):

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/stnf/recreation/climbing/recarea/?recid=6575&actid=38>

*Bureau of Land Management – Arizona & Utah*

Vermillion Cliffs National Monument & Paria Wilderness Area:

<http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/arolrsmain/paria.html>

Vermillion Cliffs National Monument & Coyote Buttes Permit Area:  
[http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/arolrsmain/paria/coyote\\_butttes.html](http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/arolrsmain/paria/coyote_butttes.html)

Cedar Mesa Backcountry:  
[http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/monticello/recreation/permits/grand\\_gulch\\_and\\_cedar.html](http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/monticello/recreation/permits/grand_gulch_and_cedar.html)

Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness Area:  
<http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/arolrsmain/aravaipa.html>

#### *California State Parks*

CA State Parks Reservations and Fees:  
[http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=737](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=737)

Big Basin Redwoods State Park:  
[http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=540HumboldtCounty](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=540HumboldtCounty)

Humboldt County Parks:  
[http://co.humboldt.ca.us/portal/living/county\\_parks](http://co.humboldt.ca.us/portal/living/county_parks)

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management. 2005. King Range National Conservation Area Approved Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision. Record of Decision, Environmental Impact Statement, Arcata, CA.

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 2007. California State Director and Pacific Southwest Regional Forester Interagency Traditional Gathering Policy. Instruction Memorandum No. CA-2007-017.

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management. 2011. King Range Wilderness and Rock & Island Wilderness Management Plan and Record of Decision, Arcata, CA.

Martin, S. and C. Widner. 1998. Final Management Report for 1997 Lost Coast Backcountry Visitor Study. Report submitted to DOI Bureau of Land Management, King Range National Conservation Area, Whitethorn, CA.

Martin, S. and E. Harris. 2004. Final Management Report for 2003 Lost Coast Backcountry Visitor Study. Report submitted to DOI Bureau of Land Management, King Range National Conservation Area, Whitethorn, CA.

U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor and Statistics. All Urban Consumers - Consumer Price Index: <http://www.bls.gov/data/>

## XVI. Appendix

Item A – Visitor Access Actions from the 2011 King Range Wilderness and Rocks & Islands Wilderness Management Plan.

*Visitor Access Action 1.1:* Manage visitor use to not exceed the maximum capacities (people at one time) for each visitor use area identified in the 2011 King Range Wilderness Management Plan Figure 3-4. The two numbers for each area in Figure 3-4 represent peak season/off season use respectively.

*Visitor Access Action 1.2:* The current “backcountry permit” program for individuals and families was initiated prior to wilderness designation. The name would be changed to the “wilderness permit” program.

*Visitor Access Action 1.3:* Permits would be required for all overnight use within the King Range Wilderness and the King Range RMP Backcountry Management Zone located adjacent to but outside of the wilderness. No allocation or permits would be instituted for day use of these areas. The permit program would be implemented consistent with 43 CFR 6302.12(b) (3).

*Visitor Access Action 1.4:* Implement an advanced reservation permit allocation system that provides for commercial and organized group uses under SRP, as well as casual individual and family use.

*Visitor Access Action 1.5:* To maintain backcountry use levels at or below the capacity thresholds established in the 2011 King Range Wilderness Management Plan Figure 3-4, an allocation system would limit starts to 60 people per day during the peak season of May 15 to September 15 and 30 starts per day during the off season of September 16 to May 14.

*Visitor Access Action 1.6:* Reserve a portion of the starts to be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Most starts would be available through a reservation system (Recreation.gov) and the remaining starts would be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Permits would then be available at the BLM Arcata and King Range offices either the day before or day of the start of the trip. Other authorized backcountry permit outlets may be designated during implementation. Any starts that are unreserved by the permitted start date would be made available at the permit outlets on a first-come, first-served basis.

*Visitor Access Action 1.7:* No specific number of starts would be allocated to commercial or organized groups through the SRP program. However, the total SRP starts between May 15 and September 15 would be limited to no more than 50 percent of the total daily allocation, i.e., no more than 30 SRP starts would be permitted in a single day. All starts would be available to SRPs from September 16 to May 14.

*Visitor Access Action 1.8:* SRP starts would be available on a first-come first-served basis, until the maximum allocation is reached. SRP holders would be penalized for non-use of projected starts in the case of cancelation or overbooking if they are not returned to the permit pool prior to 30 days before the trip start date (specific penalties would be outlined in the permit application packet). This 30-day timeframe may be adjusted or additional stipulations added to SRPs if needed to provide an incentive for permittees to return unused starts to the pool versus holding onto them so that they would be unavailable to other users.

*Visitor Access Action 1.9:* Stock animals would not be included in the allocation numbers. The maximum party size of “25 heartbeats” (people/stock combination) and 15 people per group.

Photo, opposite page: Surfers backpack along the Lost Coast at Split Rock

Photo, back cover: Free-flowing Horse Mountain Creek



