

Backcountry Management Plan

Rocky Mountain NATIONAL PARK



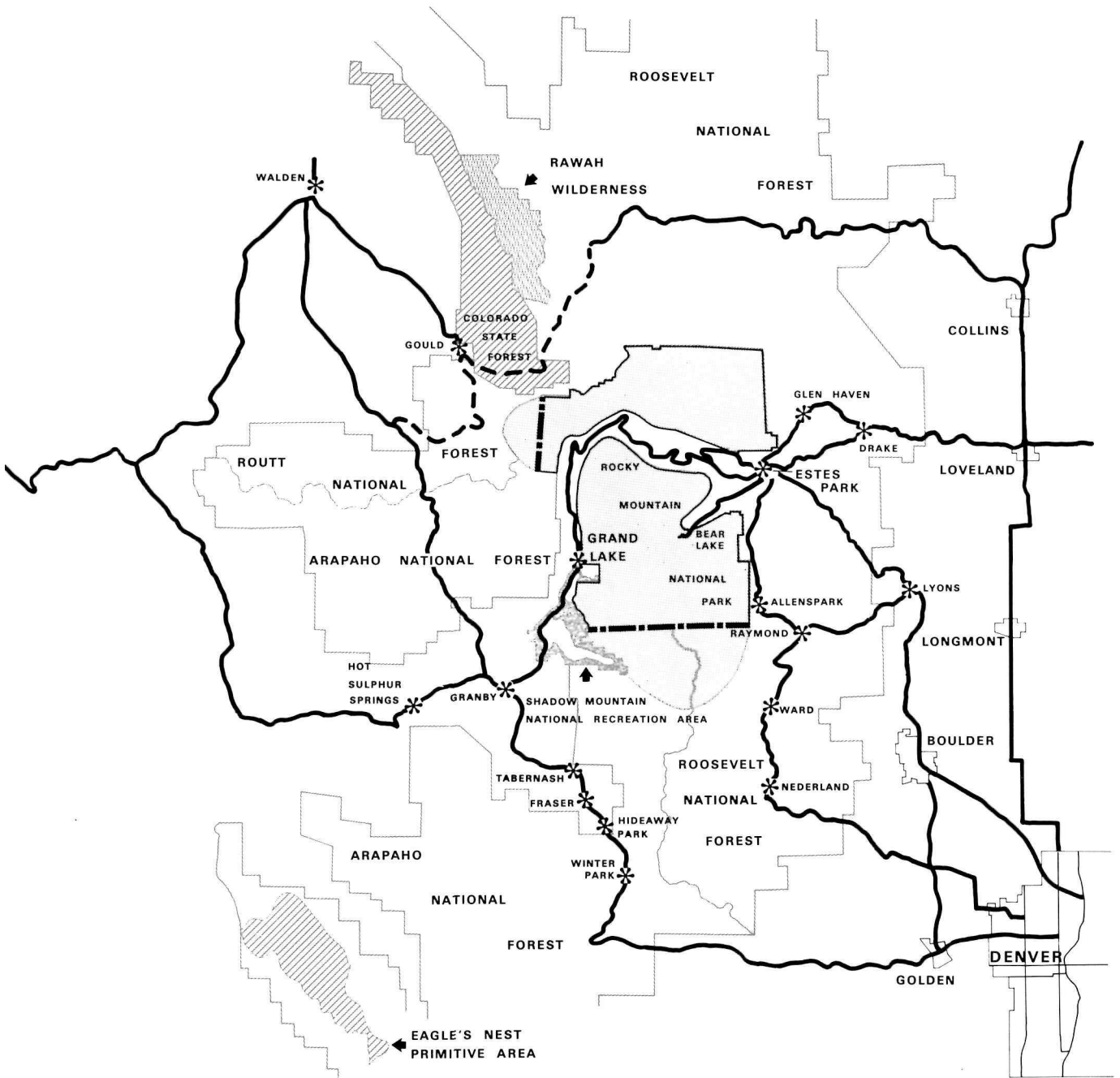
BACKCOUNTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Rocky Mountain National Park





Approved: *Roger J. Cantor* FEB. 28. 1975
Superintendent Date

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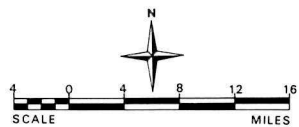
LEGEND

-  EXISTING WILDERNESS AREA
-  PRIMITIVE AREA UNDER STUDY FOR WILDERNESS DESIGNATION
-  MANAGED AS PRIMITIVE AREA
-  NATIONAL FOREST BOUNDARY

R O C K Y M O U N T A I N

PRIMITIVE CORE FOR THE REGION

VICINITY MAP



121	20,007 A
OCT 72	D 5 C

BACKCOUNTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Objective

Overnight backcountry use within Rocky Mountain National Park has increased 390 per cent from 1967 to 1974. In 1969, about 9,600 camper days were registered, while in 1974 the total reached 47,000. The impact of this use has resulted in a resource and wilderness experience deterioration. The problem is further compounded by the small size of the park (410 square miles). There are few places within the park not reachable by a round trip day hike. Unfortunately, most of the campsites are at destination sites, also the goal of the day hiker. This use, coupled with the highest horse use of any western national park, mandates a management plan.

The objective of this plan is to provide for visitor enjoyment of the backcountry resources without unacceptable deterioration. Of primary concern is maintenance of the resource and provision of a quality wilderness experience.

Functions

As specified by WASO, the backcountry management plan will have the following functions:

1. Serve as an "action plan" for the park staff in their day-to-day management of backcountry visitor use.
2. Assure effective compliance with administrative policies.
3. Serve as an "action plan" to identify and justify appropriate and needed programs which should be incorporated in budgetary programs.

Guidelines

The plan is written within the framework of existing legal and administrative guidelines, including the enabling legislation, Administrative Policies of the National Park System, Code of Federal Regulations - Title 36, and the 1964 Wilderness Act. The plan is guided further by the Rocky Mountain National Park Master Plan (1974); the Trail Construction and Maintenance Manual (1974); the Horse Management Plan (1973); the Guidelines for Backcountry Patrol (1974); the Backcountry Guidelines (Permit Issuance) (1974); and the Fire Management Plan, Parts I and II (1974).

Review

An annual review of the plan will be scheduled by a Backcountry Management Committee each fall. Composition of the committee will include the Superintendent, Chief Park Ranger, Chief Park Naturalist, West Unit Manager, Research Biologist, and Resource Management Specialist.

Public participation in the management of the backcountry will be continued. Efforts will seek involvement of the Forest Service and local conservation groups such as the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, and the Colorado Mountain Club. They will be asked to send representatives to the committee meetings.

Special Regulations

Special backcountry regulations will be published in the Federal Register in 1975 to further define and publicize the Rocky Mountain Management Plan.

Wilderness Proposal

The President has given Congress a proposal to establish 239,835 acres of wilderness within Rocky Mountain National Park. As discussed in the final environmental statement (FES 74-36), some of the adverse effects will be: the removal of management options; rationed use; restrictions on backcountry roads, developments, and use of mechanized equipment; increased costs of trail maintenance; and restriction of certain research projects and management practices.

Special provisions within the proposed wilderness legislation will authorize continued use and maintenance of vault toilets, shelters, and underground telephone lines in wilderness. Authorization will include 59 existing primitive campsite areas and sanitary control points, two ranger stations, a fire lookout, a stone shelter, two historic buildings, and a short section of underground telephone line.

VISITOR USE LIMITS AND ACTIVITIES

General

In order to minimize visitor impact--trampling, littering, and polluting--well distributed and low density use is a prerequisite. Sheer popularity of backcountry camping use (day and overnight) threatens the resources within the park. In 1967, overnight use in Rocky Mountain National Park totaled 9,602 camper days; in 1974, it was over 47,000; day use in 1974 was estimated at 250,000 visitor days. The

plan should provide for optimum use based on a management capacity. It is realized that additional studies will be needed to adjust day use capacities and improve methods of regulation.

Overnight use of the backcountry currently requires a backcountry use permit for individual sites, group sites, or crosscountry zones. Camping is permitted for not more than a total of seven days in any calendar year. Capacity of the individual sites is established at 1-7; group sites from 8-25; and in crosscountry zones - one party (1-7) per square mile. A reservation system has been established on 50% of the sites; the remaining sites are available on a 24-hour minimum limitation (See Appendix A, Overnight Backcountry Use).

The permit system is based upon watersheds, lettered A through M, within the park. It is not currently feasible to implement a cooperative program with the adjoining land management agencies.

Visitor Use Limits

An annual limit has not been established. Although snow conditions and site accessibility vary from year to year, the main season usually ranges from June 15 to Labor Day. Nightly capacity during this period is currently 1,947 persons for 212 designated sites, 16 group sites, and 24 crosscountry zones. Considering the average size party and cancellations, however, use actually totals about 1,000 campers nightly.

Further study is needed to determine the constraints for site use early in the season. Some sites need to remain closed from use until snowbanks melt out and soils become drier. As a result of the variable snow cover, there is no definite established daily carrying capacity. Furthermore, site density provides an additional complicating factor; another 38 low elevation, non-destination sites will be added by the end of 1975 to better distribute backcountry use.

If management capacity can be related to density, then an arbitrary capacity could be set at one party per square mile of wilderness, or 375 parties. If the tundra and natural reserve areas are excluded, then the number of parties would be restricted to about 220. Additional research is needed to refine these estimates.

Day use analysis is the least refined segment of this plan. The objective of backcountry day use management is to (1) collect, organize, and array data on kinds and incidence of use for each trail in the day-use zone; (2) devise ways to contain use within the zone as will be acceptable from the standpoints of resource protection, visitor safety, and experience quality - i.e., determine carrying (management) capacity for the day-use zone, and (3) implement and enforce methodology arrived at in (1) and (2) above.

CLASSIFICATION OF BACKCOUNTRY USE
Rocky Mountain National Park

Seven classes of backcountry use requiring a permit are recognized:

- Class 1. Camping in designated campsites: includes the majority of trip designations. All sites identified by a site marker. Where wood fires are allowed, steel firerings are provided. Pit toilets are provided in areas with more than 200 camper days/month or with an inadequate waste disposal area. Party size restricted to 1-7 persons.
- Class 2. Crosscountry camping: provides a low wilderness camping experience. No wood fires are allowed and no facilities are provided. Camping restricted to one night per site and two nights per crosscountry zone. Sites must be more than 25 feet from any water. Party size restricted to 1-7 persons.
- Class 3. Winter mountaineering: period of use from approximately October 1 through May. No wood fires are allowed and no facilities are provided. Campsites must be out of sight of roads and trails, more than a mile from any road, and away from the vicinity of all designated campsite areas. Party size restricted to a maximum of 15 persons.
- Class 4. Bivouac: technical climb with overnight stay. Stoves only. Usually does not involve designated sites or crosscountry zones. Party size restricted to 1-7 persons.
- Class 5. Technical climb: day use only. Includes all climbing involving use of rope and other aids.
- Class 6. Group or organizational camping: all sites identified by a site marker. Where wood fires are allowed, steel firerings are provided. Pit toilets provided. Party size restricted to 8-25 persons.
- Class 7. Multiple classification permit: may involve a variety of other class use.

BACKCOUNTRY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Designated Campsites

All of the designated sites will be identified by a campsite marker (see Appendix B, Designated Backcountry Campsites). Free selection of campsites will not be permitted except in the crosscountry zones, where no facilities are provided. Developments will be limited to a steel firering in sites where wood fires are permitted, a campsite marker at the site, a trailside campsite sign, and a pit or vault toilet where overnight use exceeds 200 camper days monthly or where an inadequate disposal area exists. The facilities are not for the convenience or comfort of the park visitor, but to prevent the indiscriminate use of rock firerings, the initiation of braided trails, and the pollution of the park's water resources. Horse camps may include a small corral or hitch rail.

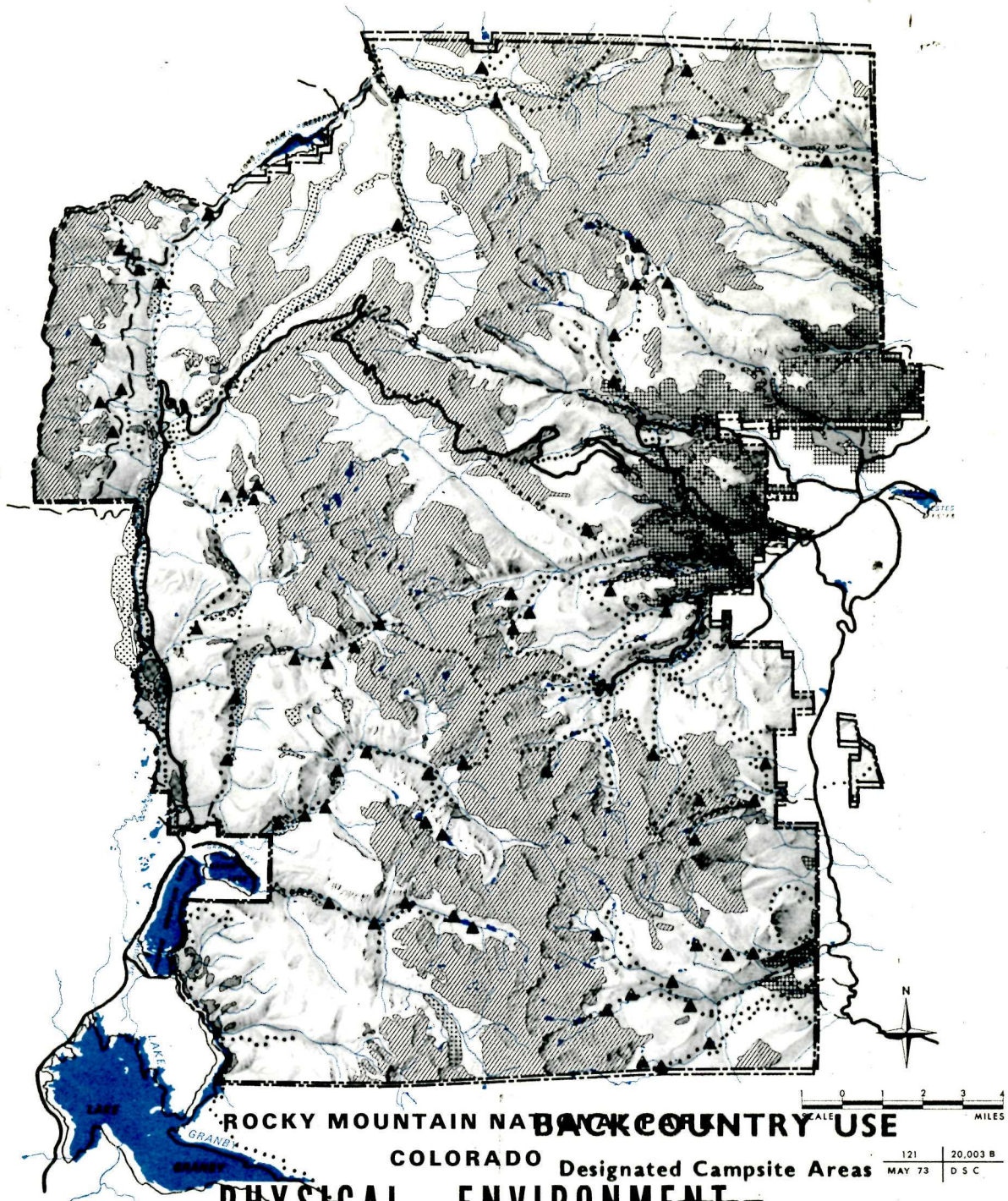
Camping will not be permitted above treeline, within the research natural areas, within meadows, or within 100 feet of lakeshores. The maximum number of sites for any area will be limited to four, where practical. Group sites and individual sites will be separated wherever possible; additional group sites will be designated after additional studies (see Appendix C, Backcountry Group or Organizational Camping). Criteria for campsite selection is provided on page 7. Monitoring will be accomplished on all sites throughout the summers. Proposals for relocations, elimination of sites, and establishment of new sites will be made on form ROMO-168, Backcountry Site/Zone Proposal (Appendix F).

Restoration of abandoned sites will be accomplished by scarification to loosen compacted soil and by natural plant succession.

Crosscountry Zones

The zone camping concept is provided for the experienced wilderness user. A study is currently underway on whether an exam should be given prior to issuance of a permit. A wilderness user card, good for the calendar year, would be issued to the individual upon successful completion of the exam. Additional analysis is required prior to implementation; the exam will be issued on a voluntary basis, however, in 1975 as an experiment.

No facilities will be provided within the zones; camping will be restricted to one party per square mile. Criteria for use are discussed in Appendix A. Monitoring of the zones will be accomplished annually to determine the extent of resource deterioration.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK BACKCOUNTRY USE

COLORADO Designated Campsite Areas

121 20,003 B
MAY 73 D S C

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT 1975

LEGEND

KEY

MANAGEMENT ECOSYSTEM

-  ALPINE TUNDRA
-  SUB-ALPINE FOREST
-  MONTANE FOREST
-  BRUSHLAND
-  WET MEADOW

DOMINANT VEGETATION

- KRUMHOLTZ TUNDRA
- DWARF SHRUB-HERB
- SEDGE-GRASS-COMPLEX
- SPRUCE-FIR-LOGPOLE
- PONDEROSA PINE
- DOUGLAS FIR
- HERB-SEDGE-GRASS
- SAGEBRUSH-MIXED GRASS
- SEDGE-WILLOW-BOG BIRCH

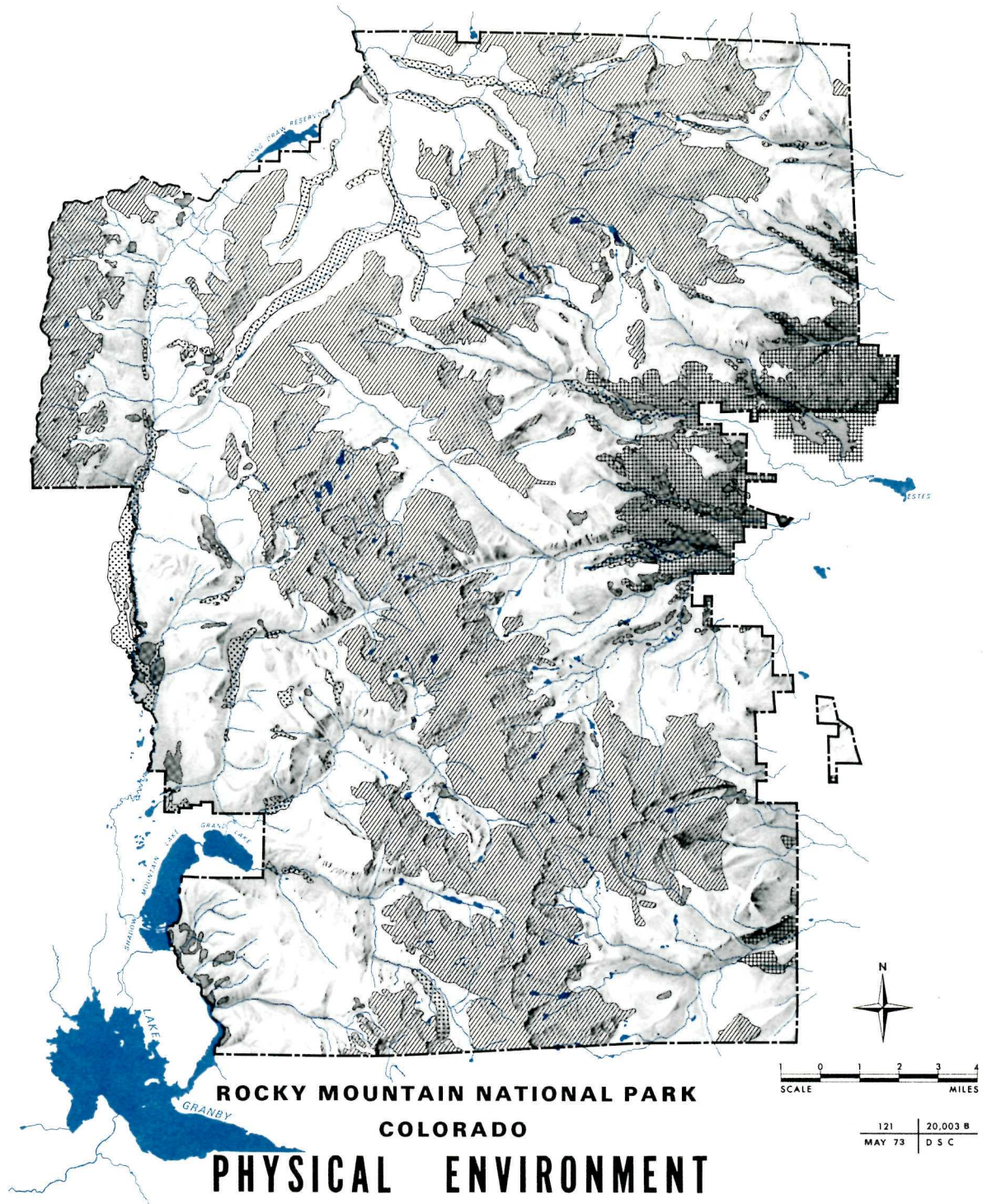
BIOLOGICAL

- VERY COLD/
DRY OR MOIST
- COLD / MOIST
- COOL & MOIST
TO HOT & DRY
- DRYER THAN SURROUNDING
- WETTER THAN SURROUNDING

USE

- NEED TO RESTRICT AND CHANNELIZE USE
- USE IS CHANNELIZED BY COLORADO
- MORE RANDOM USE IS POSSIBLE
- ATTRACTIVE, BUT WILL NOT TOLERATE UNLIMITED USE
- AVOID USE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK RESTRICTIONS



KEY

	MANAGEMENT ECOSYSTEM
	ALPINE TUNDRA
	SUB-ALPINE FOREST
	MONTANE FOREST
	BRUSHLAND
	WET MEADOW

DOMINANT VEGETATION

KRUMHOLTZ TUNDRA
DWARF SHRUB-HERB- SEDGE-GRASS-COMPLEX
SPRUCE-FIR-LODGEPOLE
PONDEROSA PINE- DOUGLAS FIR
HERB-SEDGE-GRASS
SAGEBRUSH-MIXED GRASS
SEDGE-WILLOW- BOG BIRCH

BIOLOGICAL CLIMATE

VERY COLD/ DRY OR MOIST
COLD / MOIST
COOL & MOIST / TO HOT & DRY
DRYER THAN SURROUNDING
WETTER THAN SURROUNDING

USE CONSTRAINTS

NEED TO RESTRICT AND CHANNELIZE USE
USE IS CHANNELIZED BY VEGETATION
MORE RANDOM USE IS POSSIBLE
ATTRACTIVE - BUT WILL NOT TOLERATE UNLIMITED USE
AVOID USE

121	20,003 B
MAY 73	D S C

CRITERIA FOR CAMPSITE SELECTION

I. ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

Uniqueness and/or durability of ecosystem
Present condition of ground cover
Erosion and/or siltation - current or potential
Compatibility or conflict with other uses of the area
Wildlife conflict
Adequate human waste disposal potential

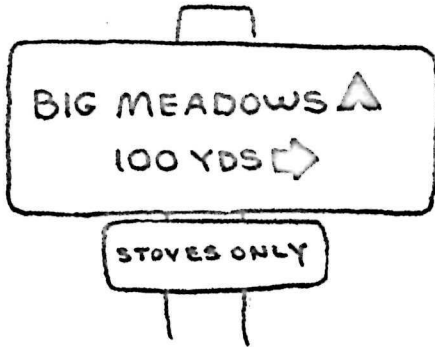
II. PRACTICALITY

Accessibility and location with respect to trail (minimum distance - 100' from trail)
Distance from stream or lake
Quality of water supply
Firewood supply or stoves only
Drainage
Levelness
How many tents will the area accommodate? (minimum distance apart - 100'; maximum number - 4)
Special hazards: fire, tree fall, rock fall exposure, lightning, etc.
Season of possible use
Availability to patrol - will a ranger pass the area at least once a week?

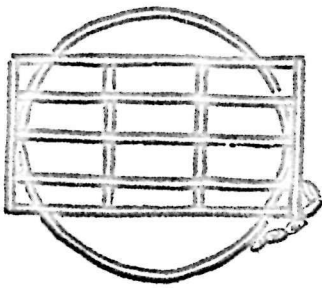
III. PUBLIC APPEAL

Attractiveness to public - current use?
Screening from other campsites or trail
Convenience of location in planning trips of more than one night along a trail
Sun exposure
Shelter from wind or storms

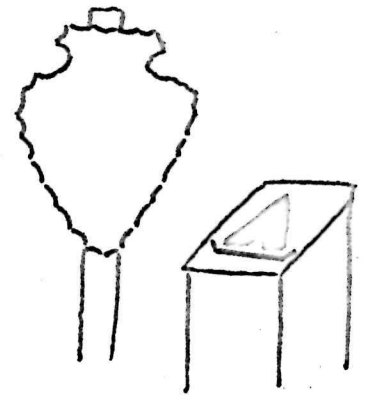
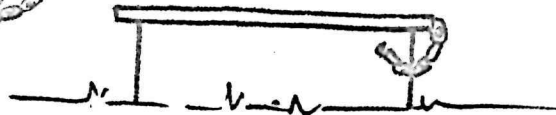
BACKCOUNTRY FACILITIES



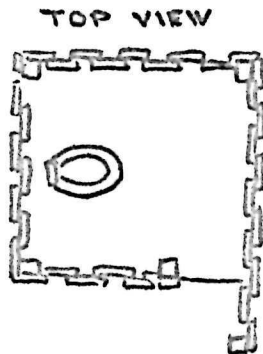
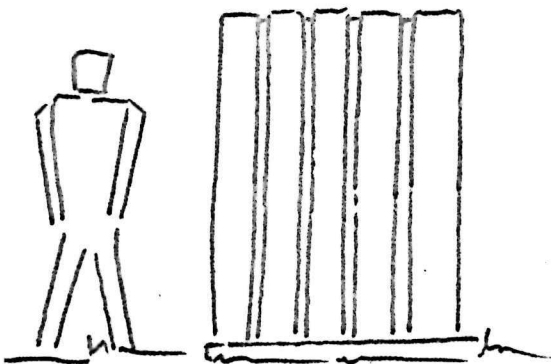
STANDARD SIGN



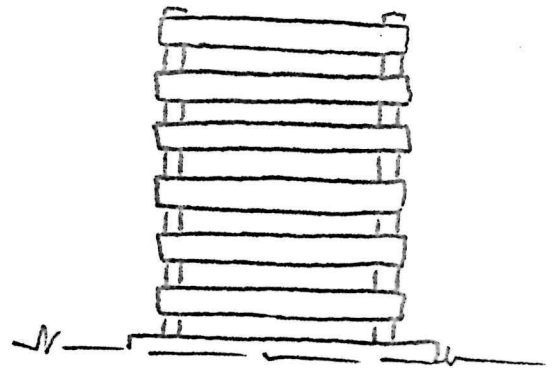
STEEL FIRE RING



SITE MARKERS



TOP VIEW



4-SIDED OPEN-TOP PIT TOILETS

Sanitation

Where soil is adequate, human waste will be buried 2 to 4 inches at least 50 feet from the campsite and 100 feet from streams or lakes. Pit toilets will be installed in designated campsite areas where intensity of use exceeds 200 camper days monthly or where the disposal area is inadequate. Vault toilets, to be evacuated by helicopter, will be installed at high density use areas such as Longs Peak. The standard design will be a 4-sided maze with an open top.

Use of soaps and detergents directly in water supplies or within 25 feet of streams and lakes will be prohibited. Regulations prohibit disposal of fish entrails in park waters or in areas of visitor concentrations; recommended disposal is by scattering in the brush for biological deterioration. This practice will be monitored to identify any problems which may arise.

The backcountry user will be required to remove all litter from the park; deposition in pit or vault toilets will be prohibited.

Firewood Utilization

Wood fires will not be allowed at or above treeline. Where fires are permitted, only dead and down wood will be utilized. The visitor will be encouraged to build small fires which burn down to white ash.

Areas where fires are allowed will be monitored to determine the availability of wood and the status of resource deterioration. Where necessary, the sites will be converted to stoves only. The long range goal of the backcountry management plan will be to establish 50% of the designated sites to a stoves only basis. Visitors will be encouraged to make maximum use of gasoline, alcohol, or other self-contained stoves.

Winter Overnight Use

This use is in effect from approximately October 1 through May. Snow conditions are the determining factor (see Appendix D, Winter Backcountry Use). Wood fires will not be permitted. Campsite must be out of sight of roads and trails, and more than one mile from any road. In addition the vicinity of all designated campsite areas, the campsites, and the water sources for them are also closed to winter camping. Use will be monitored to determine the impact of human waste disposal. Concentrated use will not be permitted; permits will be issued on the basis of one party per square mile.

Restricted Camping Areas

As previously specified, camping will be prohibited above treeline, within meadows, or in the research natural areas. Exception to the treeline restriction, however, will be permitted at the Boulderfield and Chasm Meadows.

Overnight use will also be prohibited in areas with high density day use, such as in Glacier Gorge, or within one mile from a trailhead. Additional study is needed in the Longs Peak area to determine its optimum management capacity. Overnight winter camping is prohibited at Bear Lake, Nymph Lake, Dream Lake, Emerald Lake, Gem Lake, and Poudre Lake.

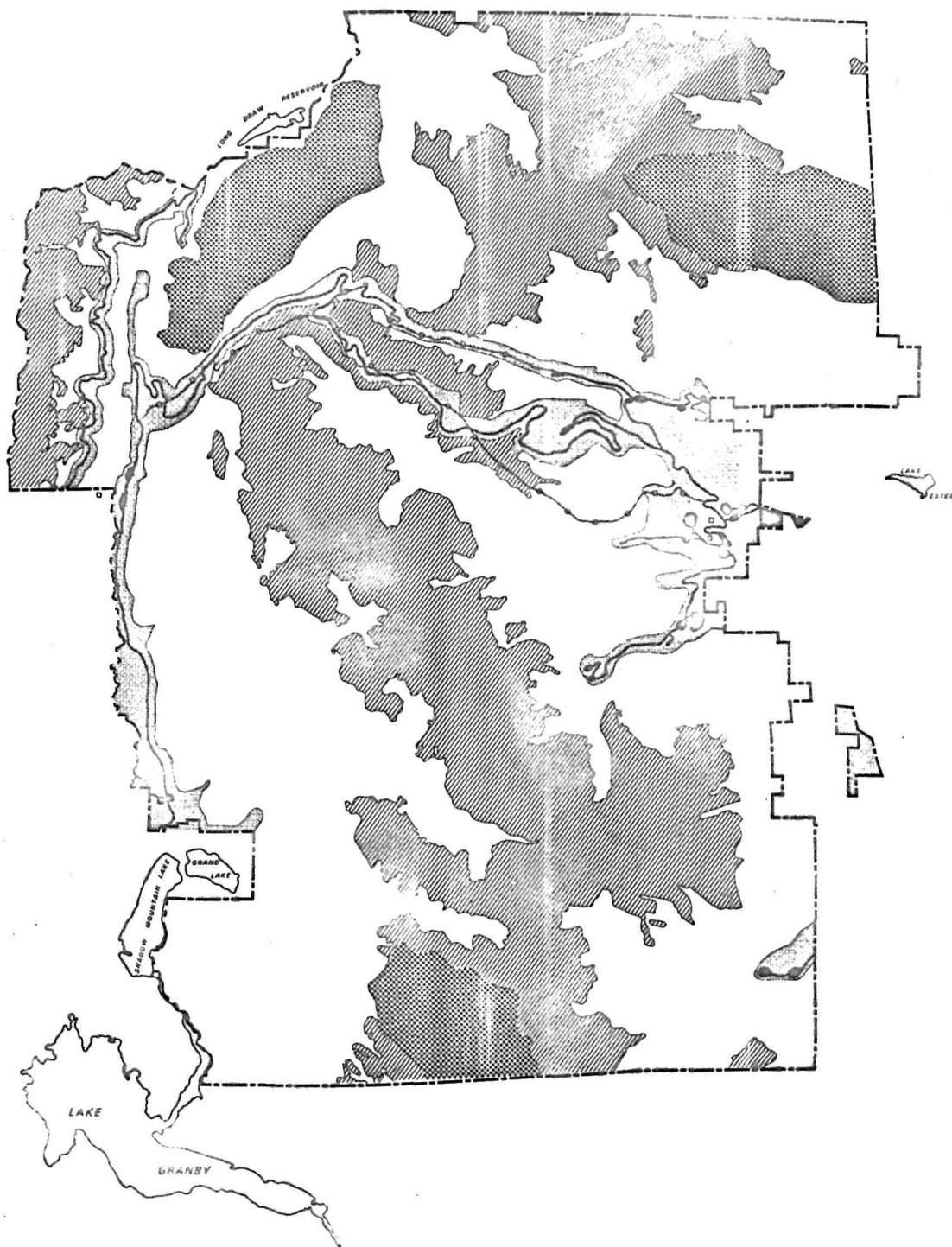
Signs and Bulletin Boards

Unpainted routed signs will be the standard for the backcountry. NPS sign standards will be followed. Within 100 feet of each trailhead will be a sign stating, "Backcountry Permit Required. Vehicles, Firearms and Pets Prohibited". All campsites will be identified on the trail with a sign identifying the sites by geographic name and a tent symbol (see page 8). Stoves only areas will be further identified by additional wording, "Stoves Only".







The use of geographic names at points of interest will be discouraged. This type of sign, considered a convenience to the park visitor, is in conflict with the Wilderness Act. Existing signs will be removed within the designated wilderness areas.

Bulletin boards will be established at all primary trailheads within the park. Trailheads originating outside the park will be marked with a small park regulations bulletin board. Wherever possible park regulations will be posted on Forest Service bulletin boards on trails entering the park from Forest lands.

AREAS CLOSED TO BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING

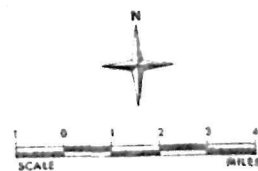


LEGEND

-  Only zone in which camping allowed
-  Historic resources
-  Research natural areas
-  Alpine tundra
-  High density use
-  Developed areas

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

COLORADO



0 1 2 3 4
MILES

* Some exceptions near Longs Peak and Grand Teton.

TRAILS

The management objectives for the trails are (1) to give high priority to trail maintenance and reconstruction, and (2) to determine what can be done to minimize horse and pedestrian use conflicts. Also of primary concern is the possibility of loop trail construction to minimize wilderness encounters. A detailed discussion of trail maintenance and construction techniques is contained in the "Trail Manual".

The primary problems of the existing trail system are inadequate maintenance of drainage facilities, horse use damage, and short-cutting by park visitors. When use occurs too early in the season, multiple trails develop and wet areas suffer resource damage. Additional trail maintenance personnel are needed. Beginning in 1976 the Youth Conservation Program will be scheduled for primary trail maintenance work.

Horse use will continue to be monitored and parties limited to 20 head of stock. Grazing will not be permitted. In 1979, the need for the two park concession stables will be reviewed and, if unneeded, will be phased out; the horse use demand will be met by the liveries adjacent to the park. Horse use not relative to a park experience will be discouraged. Trails susceptible to horse damage will be closed to such use; no crosscountry horse travel will be permitted. The Horse Management Plan (Appendix E) provides the specific criteria for use of stock within the park.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance responsibilities for trails and structures differ on the east and west sides of the park. On the west side, the West Unit Manager supervises a trails foreman through his maintenance foreman. The maintenance and emplacement of backcountry signs is primarily the responsibility of the backcountry technicians. Primary responsibility for backcountry campsite maintenance and sanitation also rests with the backcountry technicians. The trail crews work closely with the backcountry technicians in carrying out these responsibilities. On the east side, total responsibility for maintenance of the backcountry has been assigned to the Ranger Division. As a result, the trail crews have been placed under this division for closer coordination of their activities.

Site maintenance includes removal of ashes and charcoal from the fire-rings; litter pickup; and pit/vault toilet cleaning. Details for these assignments are contained in the Backcountry Technician Guidelines.

PATROLS

Compliance with the backcountry regulations requires law enforcement and monitoring of visitor activities. Regular patrols will be scheduled for each drainage; frequency will be dependent upon the amount of use. Crosscountry zones will be monitored for resource deterioration. In fall aerial patrols will be scheduled.

The park will have a strict enforcement policy; violators will generally be cited; the use of courtesy warnings will be limited. Compliance with the current regulations is estimated at between 90 to 95 per cent. It has been noted that compliance has been increasing.

Details for backcountry patrols are contained in the Backcountry Technician Guidelines. Form ROMO-158 (Appendix G) will be utilized to report trail conditions and visitor use activities. The reports will be summarized and the recommendations developed into an "action plan" for approval by the Chief Park Ranger. Specific site or zone proposals, however, will continue to be submitted on Form ROMO-168, Backcountry Site/Zone Proposal.

STAFFING

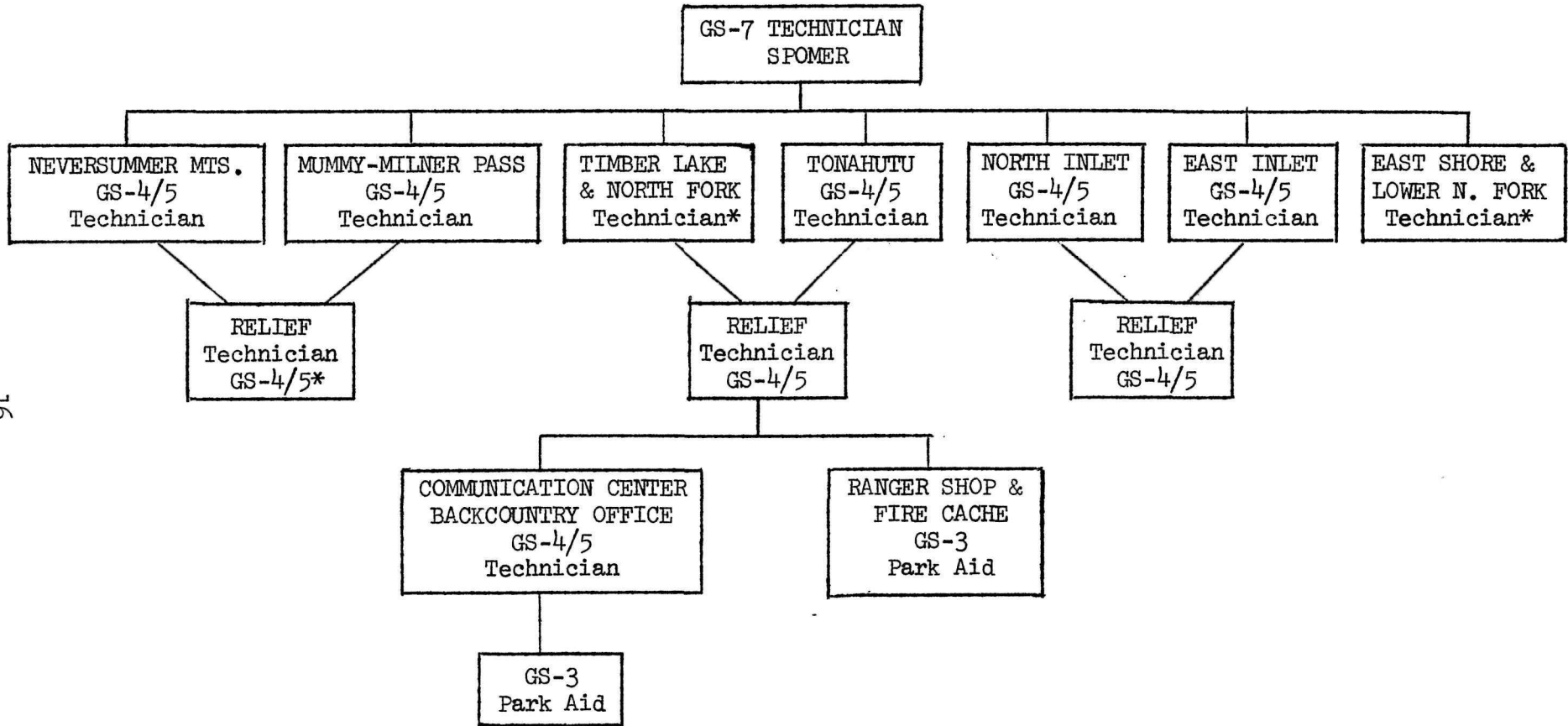
Staffing in 1974 was inadequate, although a supplemental allotment of \$18,000 was added to the backcountry budget. Sufficient personnel were not available for a comprehensive patrol within each drainage or for adequate coverage of lieu days. The primary inadequacy was the monitoring of twenty-four crosscountry zones within twelve drainages. To properly monitor the backcountry, additional backcountry technicians are required; these personnel are identified on the staffing charts included on the following pages.

TRAINING

For proper implementation of the backcountry management plan, it is critical that all involved personnel be adequately trained. Since the majority of backcountry personnel during the peak period of use is seasonal, much of the training will be accomplished during early summer.

All backcountry personnel will receive a copy of the Backcountry Technician Guidelines. An overnight training workshop session will be scheduled during the training week. During the remaining weeks, each technician will spend one day biweekly in the backcountry offices at ROMO East and ROMO West. Backcountry Office personnel in turn will spend a similar amount of time in the backcountry patrolling the trails and campsites.

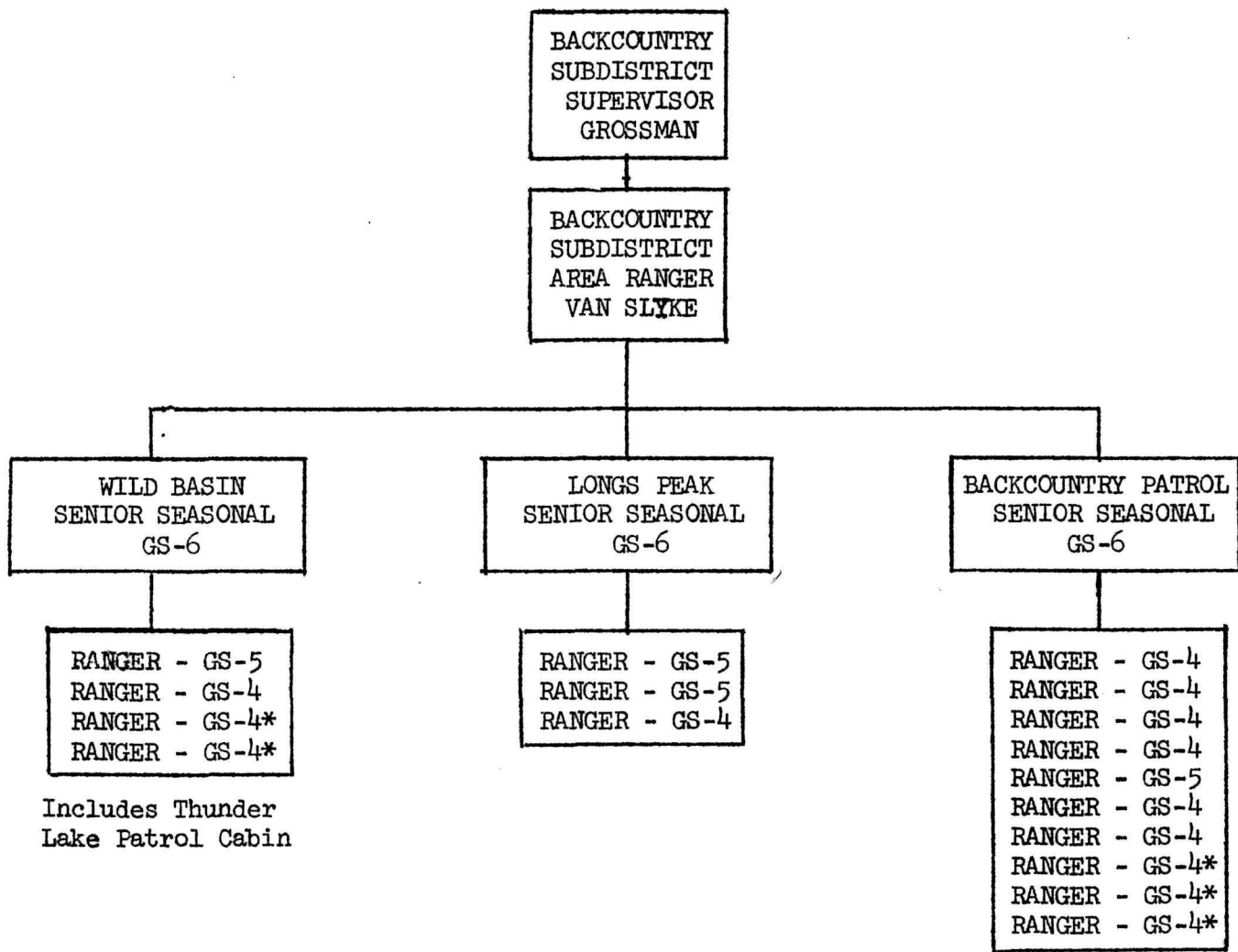
WEST UNIT BACKCOUNTRY ORGANIZATION



16

*ADDITIONAL POSITIONS
NEEDED 1975

EAST UNIT BACKCOUNTRY ORGANIZATION

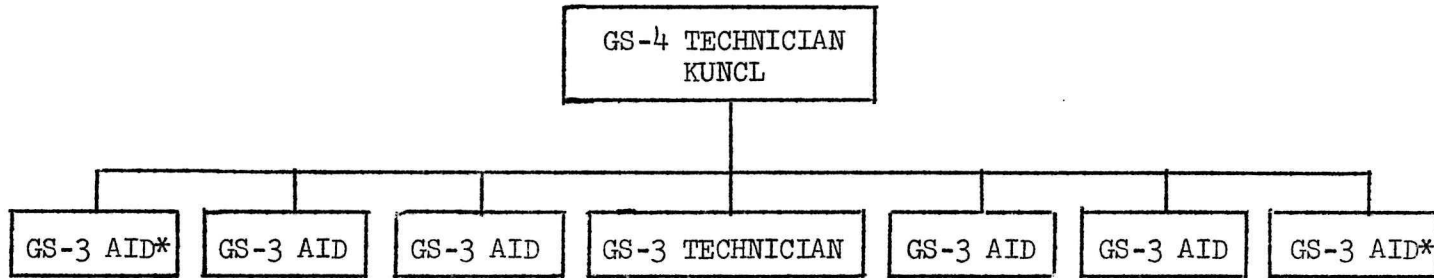


Includes Thunder
Lake Patrol Cabin

*ADDITIONAL POSITIONS
NEEDED 1975

Includes Fern Lake,
Lawn Lake and North
Fork Patrol Cabins

EAST DISTRICT BACKCOUNTRY OFFICE STAFFING



18

Tours of duty will involve 3 employees each day in a visitor contact station, and 2 employees each day in a non-visitor contact duty station (the "nerve center").

* indicates new positions in 1975

Trail crew foremen will be provided a copy of the Trail Manual. Sufficient time will be spent on trail work to clarify any maintenance or reconstruction techniques. Since trail drainage is of primary importance, all types of waterbars will be maintained and constructed during this training session. With assistance of ranger personnel staff specialists and the Trail Manual (as amended 1974), a formal training program will be provided immediately prior to the summer season for all trail foremen. Working together as one crew during the training period, the foremen will receive both classroom sessions and specific work technique experience.

Monitoring of backcountry activities by supervisory personnel will determine the need for subsequent training sessions.

RESEARCH

The primary research need centers on the management of backcountry day use. Data needs to be gathered, methods of regulation need to be devised, and a management capacity for day use needs to be determined. The key areas of study are Wild Basin, Glacier Gorge-Bear Lake, and Longs Peak.

Also of importance is the need for a resource evaluation of the backcountry to determine or identify resources deterioration. Included in this study should be an evaluation of stream and lake pollution.

A third project is the analysis of trail construction and management techniques. Basic information is needed on construction, maintenance, and management of the trail system to preserve the resources.

OVERNIGHT BACKCOUNTRY USE
(Other than Winter--generally June through September)

Appendix A

In the past few years, intensified use by a rapidly growing number of campers has resulted in damage to some of the more popular backcountry camping spots. To protect the fragile resources of Rocky Mountain National Park, a camping permit system is in effect for all backcountry camping within the Park.

A written Backcountry Use Permit is required for all overnight stays outside of campgrounds accessible by roads. Permits are available from the East and West District Backcountry Offices, at Headquarters, and must be obtained before entering the backcountry. The permits cost nothing more than some of your time to obtain.

If you plan to be backpacking in June, July, or August, you may make reservations for your backcountry campsite. Reservations may be made by writing to Reservations, Backcountry Office, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, Colorado 80517. Written reservations will be accepted at any time of the year. Reservations are also available by phoning 303-586-2371, and asking for backcountry reservations, however, phone reservations will not be accepted during the months of June, July, and August. All requests for reservations must be received at the Park 7 days before the start of your trip. Only half of the sites in each camping area are available for reservations, so that the remainder are available on a first come, first served basis, one day in advance of the first night's camp.

A permit tag is issued to the party leader, and should be attached to his pack. The tag must be shown to backcountry patrol personnel upon request. When camp is established, the tag is attached to the tent.

The same permit is required for all technical mountain climbing. Technical climbing includes all climbing using ropes and other aids.

Your permit entitles you to camp only in those campsites and on those dates listed on the permit tag. Campsites are located on sites that more readily withstand the wear and tear of camping. To camp elsewhere only spreads the damage to areas that recover less easily.

Parties are limited to no more than seven people. Parties larger than seven fall into the Group Camping category.

Backcountry camping is limited to a total of 7 days each year. You may stay up to 3 days in each campsite before moving to a different area. If you plan to take advantage of the cross-country zone camping, your stay is limited to 2 days in each zone, and you will have to move your camp at least one mile each day.

Wood fires are permitted only in metal fire rings. Where metal rings are not provided, campers must use containerized fuel stoves. These sites are designated "stoves only", and fires of any type, except the stove, are not allowed.

All trash must be packed out, and never buried, burned, or tossed in toilet pits. If others have been careless, please help by removing their litter.

Pets of any kind are not permitted in the backcountry. The presence of domestic animals frightens away wildlife that you or other hikers could enjoy.

(over)

Vehicles and firearms are prohibited in the Park backcountry.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE REGULATIONS IS IN VIOLATION OF THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, AND VIOLATORS WILL BE CITED AND SUBJECT TO PROSECUTION.

REMEMBER...you are in a wilderness area for one or several days. Willingly accept the change of surroundings and the few discomforts associated with camping and hiking. You came seeking a quality wilderness experience. To alter any part of the Park for creature comforts can only lower the quality of the wilderness.

Please observe the following conservation practices:

Anything that is obtrusive or that can be used to modify the terrain should be left at the roadhead.

Avoid pollution of lakes and streams: Remove water for washing dishes, hands, etc., from the source in a container and use it away from open water courses. Dispose of this wash water away from the campsite--NOT back in or near the stream.

Where no outhouses are present, disposal of human waste becomes a problem if not done correctly. Select a spot at least 100 feet from any watercourse, and dig a hole 6" deep, preserving the sod if possible. Use of a small, light-weight garden trowel is suggested. After use, fill the hole with loose soil, topped by the sod. Nature will do the rest.

Stay on the trail, minimizing your impact. Shortcutting not only damages the fragile vegetation, but quickly leads to water erosion damage that often washes out whole trail sections.

Observe wildlife from a distance. All wild animals will protect themselves, their young, and their territory from danger. The bite of a squirrel or chipmunk can be very painful, and may transmit disease.

Be easy on the trees! Trees grow slowly at high altitudes. Use a small fire, where they are permitted, or a gas stove. Let your fire burn down to white ash, so that fireplaces can be kept clean. Never leave a fire unattended.

Only everybody's extra effort will save anybody's favorite spot.

Holders of backcountry permits are requested to notify a ranger if unable to make use of the full time stated on the permit. This will allow issuance of a permit to others for those unused days. DEMAND EXCEEDS THE SITES AVAILABLE--PLEASE DO YOUR PART TO HELP.

The mountainous backcountry environment contains many hazards not commonly encountered. A few of these are; slipping on snowfields, falling into turbulent streams, mountain climbing without proper experience or equipment, continuing to travel in violent lightning, wind, or snow storms, and encounters with wildlife. Any of these can cause serious injury and ruin your backpack trip. If ever in doubt, please ask a ranger.

Have a good trip, and walk lightly on the land.

Rocky Mountain National Park
DESIGNATED BACKCOUNTRY CAMPSITES

A free written permit, available from the Backcountry Office at Park Headquarters, is required for all overnight backcountry use and technical climbs. Below and on the back are listed the designated campsite locations in alphabetical order. Code numbers adjacent to the site name refer to locations on maps which are located at all permit issuing stations. The site names generally refer to a nearby geographic feature on the park topographic maps. As part of the wilderness experience, hikers and campers are required to abide by the regulations pertaining to this protected area. Violators of park regulations will be issued Federal "Violation Notices" requiring an appearance before the United States Magistrate at Estes Park, Colorado.

Each site is limited to 7 or less people. Larger parties may refer to the "Group or Organizational Backcountry Camping" handout.

Code	Site Name	<u>EAST DISTRICT</u>		Total No. of Sites
		<u>Individual Sites</u>	<u>Group Sites</u>	
E-3	Black Lake (stoves only)*	3		3
G-3	Bluebird Lake (stoves only)*	3		3
E-2	Boulderbrook (stoves only)*	2		2
E-1	Boulderfield (stoves only)*	10		10
G-9	Campers Creek	1		1
F-1	Chasm Meadow (stoves only)*	7		7
D-6	Cub Lake	2		2
D-2	Fern Lake	5	1	6
G-11	Finch Lake	4	1	5
F-3	Goblin's Forest (stoves only)*	4		4
B-3	Halfway	2		2
G-5	Hunter's Creek	3		3
F-2	Jim's Grove (stoves only)*	10	1	11
E-4	Lake of Glass (stoves only)*	2		2
C-1	Lawn Lake (stoves only)*	6	1	7
B-1	Lost Lake	4		4
B-2	Lost Meadow	3	1	4
E-5	Mill Creek Basin	4		4
F-4	Moore Park	2		2
G-6	N. Saint Vrain	4		4
D-1	Odessa Lake (stoves only)*	3		3
G-10	Ouzel Falls	4		4
G-7	Ouzel Lake	4		4
G-8	Pear Creek	3		3
G-4	Pear Lake (stoves only)*	4		4
D-5	Pool	3		3
C-4	Roaring River	2		2
G-1	Sandbeach Lake	6	1	7
D-3	Spruce Lake (stoves only)*	2		2
A-1	Stormy Peaks (stoves only)*	5	1	6
B-4	Stormy Peaks So. (stoves only)*	2		2
G-2	Thunder Lake (stoves only)*	5	1	6
C-3	Ypsilon Creek	2		2
D-4	Ute Meadow (stoves only)*	1		1

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(over)

Code	Site Name	WEST UNIT		Total No. of Sites
		Individual Sites	Group Sites	
K-2	Big Meadows (stoves only)*	4		4
I-3	Box Canyon (stoves only)*	2		2
L-2	Cascade Falls (stoves only)*	2		2
H-2	Chapin Creek	2		2
M-3	Dipper	1		1
I-2	Ditch Camp #3	3	1	4
M-2	East Inlet Junction	1		1
K-3	Granite Falls	2		2
M-4	Gray Jay	1		1
H-1	Hague Creek	3	1	4
L-7	Hallett Creek	4		4
I-4	Hitchens Gulch (stoves only)*	4		4
J-2	Jackstraw	3	1	4
H-4	Koenig	2		2
L-9	Lake Nanita (stoves only)*	4		4
L-8	Lake Nokoni (stoves only)*	4		4
M-6	Lake Verna	4	1	5
I-1	La Poudre Pass	4		4
K-1	Lodgepole	2		2
M-5	Lone Pine Lake	4		4
M-1	Lower East Inlet	2		2
H-3	Mummy Pass Creek	2		2
L-4	North Inlet Horse Camp		1	1
L-6	North Inlet Junction	3		3
J-5	Onahu Creek	2		2
L-5	Ptarmigan	2		2
I-6	Red Mountain (stoves only)*	3		3
J-3	Rockslide	1		1
J-4	Snowbird	1		1
L-3	Snow Course	2		2
I-5	Stage Road	2		2
L-1	Summerland Park	3	1	4
J-1	Timber Creek	2		2
K-6	Timberline (stoves only)*	2		2
K-5	Tonahutu Horse Camp		1	1
K-4	Tonahutu Meadows	2		2
				92

Advance reservations cannot be made for:

Dipper, Lodgepole, Lower East Inlet, Onahu Creek, Snowbird, and Summerland Park. (Except all group sites may be reserved ahead.)

Total No. of areas in park---70

Total No. of sites in park--227

Party size for group sites is limited to a maximum of 25 people.

* (stoves only)--means mountain stoves using gasoline, propane, alcohol, etc., NO WOOD OR CHARCOAL FIRES, AND NO BURNING OF TRASH!

3/75 - Subject to revision and closure of specific areas.

Rocky Mountain National Park
BACKCOUNTRY
GROUP OR ORGANIZATIONAL CAMPING

Demand for backcountry campsites by groups or organizations, both locally and nationwide, is growing rapidly. In order to provide a worthwhile experience for those entering the backcountry of this park, certain guidelines are necessary. All groups are reminded that park visitors seek the backcountry to find the solitude and tranquility it has to offer. Leaders are requested to see to it that their group does not destroy the enjoyment by others of that setting.

Groups are expected to comply with all backcountry regulations. Below are listed further regulations pertaining specifically to group camping.

1. A "group" is any party of 8 people or more traveling together and is limited to a maximum of 25 people, including counselors, guides, etc. Groups are not permitted to break into smaller parties and occupy individual sites in a given campsite area. During the winter months, groups are limited to a maximum of 15 persons, and may not camp in designated group sites. See "Winter Backcountry Use" handout.
2. The organization name and address, and the leader's name will appear on the "Backcountry Use Permit".
3. Advance reservations may be obtained by writing Backcountry Office, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, Colorado, 80517, or by calling 303-586-2371, and asking for Backcountry Reservations. Telephone requests will not be accepted during June, July, or August. All requests for reservations must be received one week (7 days) before the first night's camp in the backcountry. Permits must be picked up in person.
4. Groups will be limited to two nights camping per area, and the park-wide seven nights per year camping limitation applies.
5. Sanitation is a special problem with groups--please use the privies.
6. Because of the capacity demand during July and August, we request that local area groups refrain from week-end trips during these months.
7. Designated group sites for use during June through September are presently limited to specific sites at the following areas:

East District

Fern Lake
Finch Lake
**Jim's Grove
**Lawn Lake
*Lost Meadow
Sandbeach Lake
**Stormy Peaks
* **Thunder Lake

West Unit

Ditch Camp #3
Hague Creek
Jackstraw
Lake Verna
*North Inlet
Summerland
*Upper Tonahutu

** indicates stoves only campsites, NO fires allowed.

* Horse Group Camps. All campers using stock animals, please refer to "Use of Private Saddle and Pack Stock" handout for special regulations that apply. Horse camps will be made available to hiking groups (Max. of 25 people) if not taken by a horse-mounted group.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK
Estes Park, Colorado 80517

Winter Backcountry Use

(In effect from approximately October 1 through May)

Winter use takes many forms in this Park from lift-served downhill skiing at Hidden Valley to overnight winter mountaineering trips high into the backcountry.

This information is intended primarily for the visitor who has decided to venture forth into the backcountry in winter. Some factors apply equally to both day and overnight use, others are unique to the overnight camper. Solo trips are not recommended. If you must go alone, be sure someone knows your trip plans.

Weather affects everyone. The Park experiences a wide variety of conditions throughout the winter. Generally speaking, the weather forecasts put out by the Denver area TV stations can serve as a guide to Park weather. Possibly of more value than the specific forecasts are the weather map discussions which tend to show developing storms that are likely to move into the area. This is particularly true for those planning a trip of several days. However, the mountains tend to "make their own weather" in spite of weather forecasts.

Those visitors planning long day or overnight trips should carry adequate gear to protect themselves during changeable weather conditions. A sudden increase in wind or a sudden snowstorm can change an otherwise beautiful day into a bone-chilling experience. An extra sweater and windproof outer clothing can enable you to take change in stride. You should know how wind-chill affects the body.

Most overnight trips require gear suitable for temperatures to -35°F . and if you are going to more exposed locations (above treeline) you may experience zero visibility in ground blizzards and chill factors of -50°F . to below -100°F . In the winter, full bivouac gear should be carried, even on day trips to such exposed locations.

Avalanche hazard frequently exists, particularly after a period of snowfall and wind. Winter backcountry travelers should know how to recognize and avoid potential avalanche areas. Check with Park Rangers concerning recent snow and route conditions, especially if you are unfamiliar with the area.

Sanitation is becoming a problem in the concentrated use areas. Where toilets are accessible they should be used. If none are available, please select sites away from lakes, streams, and natural drainages, as indicated by valley-like depressions in the snowpack. Toilet sites should also be away from the normal travel routes through the area.

Wood fires are not permitted. A stove and fuel are necessary to melt snow and provide you with drinking water, also for cooking meals.

Overnight Use

A written "Backcountry Use Permit" is required for registration of all overnight trips into the backcountry. These may be obtained within 1 day of departure from the Park Headquarters on the east side of the Park, or at the West Unit office for those entering the Park from Grand Lake.

(over)

Nine areas in the Park are specifically closed to overnight stays--Bear Lake, Nymph Lake, Dream Lake, Emerald Lake, Gem Lake, Poudre Lake; Paradise Park, Specimen-Shipler Mountains and West Creek (closed as research natural areas).

The following special conditions apply to winter overnight trips:

1. All winter campers must carry stoves and enough fuel for all cooking and snow melting, plus emergency supply.
2. Wood fires are not permitted.
3. Campsites must be:
 - a. Out of sight of roads and trails.
 - b. More than a mile from any road.
 - c. Camp area must be specified on permit by drainage and standard subunit title.
4. No cutting of boughs for beds or lean-tos. Snow caves are suggested.
5. The permit tag must be attached to the outside of the pack and shown to Rangers or Patrolmen if requested.
6. The vicinity of all designated campsite areas, the campsite area, and the water sources for them are closed to winter camping.
7. Winter permits may be obtained by phone (586-2371) from 8-4:45 daily. Check-in is required and may be done in person or by phone. Persons failing to check in will be called collect for confirmation.

The following are considered minimum equipment for winter backcountry travel:

Stove--Gasoline type best. For cooking, melting snow for water. No Wood Fires!

Extra Food--High energy, no preparation. Carry water.

Winter Boots--Frostbite is likely above treeline with single mountain boots or lightweight touring boots. Multi-layered boots are necessary.

Adequate clothing--windproof outer garments, wool pants and sweater(s), wool cap, mittens (not gloves), long underwear, gaitors (keep snow out of boots and legs dry), extra socks and mittens.

Skis or snowshoes--avoid oversnow travel on foot. Ski poles help support you.

Repair Kit & Knife--Tape, wire, cord, screws sufficient to repair broken bindings, etc.

Shelter--tent or snowcave shovel; lightweight groundcloth. The two will provide shelter.

Map and Compass--Practice use beforehand; "white out" blizzards are not uncommon.

Flashlight--gets very dark very early; extra batteries.

First-aid Kit--help is a long way away in winter.

Sleeping Bag--good insurance even on day trips.

Dark Glasses and Goggles--winter sun and wind are intense; carry extras.

Face Mask or Balaclava--A must item. High winds common above treeline.

Matches and Candle--emergency fire starters.

Avalanche cord--avoid avalanche areas!

Ice Axe, Crampons & Rope--only if you plan to do some climbing; easy summer routes may become technical when covered with snow and ice.

Good Judgment--keeps party together, lets you turn back when necessary.

INFORMATION ON CURRENT CONDITIONS is available at Park Headquarters west of Estes Park (Code-A-Phone message on 586-2385), or at the West Unit Office just north of Grand Lake (627-3471).

Horse Management Plan for
Rocky Mountain National Park
March 1975

Introduction

The use of horses for recreation as well as transportation is deeply entrenched in western history. This heritage has led to the present status of horse use in Rocky Mountain National Park. Undoubtedly public interest in riding a horse into wild areas is not going to vanish. Increased effort, therefore, must be made to properly provide for this use.

Horse use, however, must be consistent with the perpetuation of the natural resources for which the Park was established. Natural ecosystems must, as far as possible, be maintained intact. In order to meet this requirement certain measures, as indicated in the Park's 1972 Preliminary Environmental Assessment on Horse Use, will have to be taken without delay. For the present time, we want to protect the resources and provide for this use with the least possible restrictions. Public understanding will be an important part of the program. Horse users must be aware that some damage is being caused by this use. The riding of a horse within the Park should be considered a means of seeing the Park rather than an end in itself.

This plan primarily emphasizes the responsibility of various individuals to help solve the problems and outlines some restrictions presently considered necessary. It is not the "final answer" and changes are expected as specific problems or solutions arise, or more information is available.

The objectives of this plan are:

1. To fix responsibility for horse use and trail management.
2. To increase the effectiveness of our present maintenance efforts through improved planning and communication among involved parties.
3. To implement special restrictions and suggestions which will directly reduce the impact of horses.
4. To promote better planning by liveries and the National Park Service to better distribute impact and reduce horse-hiker conflict.

General Concepts

1. Horse use of any part of the Park may be prohibited at the discretion of the Superintendent in order to protect Park values or visitors. This restriction will include the use of all stock--horses, mules, ponies, burros. Such closures will be published and adequately marked. Generally, closures will be temporary until conditions requiring the closure can be corrected.
2. No new trails will be established without proper planning and approval of the Superintendent. Trails conflicting with wildlife habitat will be rerouted if possible. Any trail routing will be coordinated with the Resource Management Specialist, Research Biologist and Chief Park Ranger.
3. Trail guides or party leaders are responsible for knowing and understanding Park regulations.
4. Normal backcountry use regulations on fires and camping apply. All trash will be removed from the Park. Some selected campsites will be designed specifically for horse parties with sanitation facilities and hitch rack or corral provided.
5. All National Park Service personnel and livery employees in the backcountry will be expected to help prevent damage to Park values by insuring knowledge and obedience of Park regulations by visitors and accomplishing minor and emergency maintenance.
6. The use of special management techniques, including one-way trails, single use trails or planned circulation systems, will be favorably considered to reduce trail impact or horse-hiker conflict.
7. Handouts will be prepared summarizing the regulations and concepts of horse management with which both the private horse parties and liveries should be familiar.
8. All liveries will be required as a condition of the applicable Special Use Permit to report horse use statistics by the 25th of each month to the Chief Park Ranger's office.

Restrictions

1. Stock will be confined to established and designated trails open to their use. Paved roads or trails will not be used. Cross-country travel or shortcutting is not permitted.
2. No grazing is permitted anywhere in the Park. Complete rations must be carried on extended trips. The use of concentrate or treated rations to feed horses using Park trails is encouraged.
3. A horse party is limited to 20 horses including pack stock. Loose herding of pack or saddle horses on Park trails is prohibited.
4. Hitch racks or corrals will be used when available. Horses will not be tied for long periods in random locations where they can damage the vegetation.
5. The National Park may not be used as a place of business or point of origin for business operations except as authorized by written permits and contracts.

Responsibility for Management

CHIEF PARK RANGER

1. The Chief Park Ranger will recommend temporary or permanent trail closures or limitations on horse use to the Superintendent when conditions warrant such closures or limitations on use based on reports received from Ranger Division personnel. Coordination in such matters will also be maintained with the Resource Management Specialist and the Research Biologist.
2. He will insure that each livery permit contains a clause requiring the permittee to submit monthly public use statistics.
3. He will review each permit annually, concerning the permit fee and number of horses authorized; adjustments will be made as deemed prudent, based on environmental and economic considerations.
4. As a condition of the applicable special use permit, all liveries will be required to report horse use statistics to the Chief Park Ranger's office no later than the 25th of each month.
5. He will provide copies of detailed route maps, provided by each livery, to the District Rangers.
6. He will prepare an annual summary of horse use, separating data by liveries within the Park and around its periphery. District Rangers will be provided copies of the summary and will develop and maintain a map of such use, compiled from the annual summary.

DISTRICT RANGER

1. The District Ranger will maintain records of the volume and distribution of horse use on each trail for use by Subdistrict Rangers and Trail Foremen by compiling data provided by the Chief Park Ranger's office and observations by backcountry personnel.
2. He will maintain independent records of trail conditions which designate problem sections. These records will be available to the trail foreman. If conditions are sufficiently bad he will recommend a trail closure to the Chief Park Ranger.
3. He will have all personnel under his supervision, who are using the trails, do minor and emergency maintenance. This will include waterbars and sign repair.
4. He will contact horse parties to insure knowledge of regulations and understanding of Park values.
5. He will insure that trails closed to horse use are adequately marked.
6. He will attempt to determine the extent of private horse use through employee reports and contact with horse owner organizations.
7. He will evaluate problem areas in trail management to determine needs for special restrictions or alternate trail construction.
8. District Rangers will be provided copies of the annual summary of horse use and will develop and maintain a map of such use compiled from the annual summary.

TRAILS FOREMAN

1. The Trails Foreman will coordinate all maintenance and construction programs with the District Ranger.
2. He will program construction or reconstruction of trails by priority, on basis of need.
3. He will plan trail maintenance that is needed to maintain trails to prescribed standards under present use levels. Deficiencies which he cannot correct will be documented. Under critical conditions, temporary closures or limitations on horse use will be discussed with the District Ranger and recommended to the Chief Park Ranger.
4. He will utilize horse use figures and maps provided by the District Ranger to relate maintenance plans to horse use.
5. He will coordinate and supervise all volunteer or outside maintenance or reconstruction efforts, including that provided by the liveries.
6. He will make studies to improve trail maintenance techniques, including:
 - a. Evaluation of the effectiveness of trail construction techniques.
 - b. Evaluation of the use of portable rock crushers.
 - c. Evaluation of the use of soil cement or other tread-holding material.

Concessioner and Special Use Permittees

1. No increase will be made in the number of commercial liveries authorized to operate in the Park. When a livery is sold, renewal of the Special Use Permit will be at the discretion of the Superintendent.
2. The number of horses authorized for use in the Park by a livery will not be increased without special permission.
3. Liveries using Park trails will provide a detailed map of exact routes used to the Chief Park Ranger. The daily number of trips made on each route will be reported monthly to the Chief Park Ranger's office. Failure to provide accurate records will subject the operator to revocation of the permit.
4. Scheduled livery rides shorter than two hours from the point of origin will be discouraged on Park trails as not being consistent with Park objectives.
5. The livery operator assumes direct responsibility for his employees, their conduct in the Park and knowledge of Park regulations. He is also responsible for the conduct of any rider using horses owned or leased by him.
6. In the interest of public safety, horses used on mountain trails must be well trained and in good physical condition. Complete sets of standard tack, in good condition, will be used. Slickers will be provided for each rider.
7. The mechanical transportation of stock or customers over Park roads is not authorized by Special Use Permit. Trucking or trailering of stock on Park roads is subject to existing fees. Special use permittees must obtain prior clearance from the Superintendent for loading or unloading stock along the Bear Lake, Moraine Park, or Upper Beaver Meadows roads.
8. The feeding of concentrate or treated rations to horses using the Park trails is encouraged. This will reduce the manure load and the chance of spreading exotic plants.

Trails Closed to Use of Stock:

Cross-country travel or off-trail use of stock is prohibited Parkwide.

1. Bear Lake Area
 - Bear Lake nature trail
 - Emerald Lake trail.
 - Lake Haiyaha trail and connection to Loch-Mills junction
 - Loch Vale trail - beyond the hitch rack
 - Mills Lake trail - beyond Loch-Mills junction
2. North Fork
 - Lost Lake trail - beyond hitch rack
 - Stormy Peaks Pass to Mummy Pass (unconstructed)
3. Ute Trail - Upper Beaver Meadows to Forest Canyon Pass
4. Longs Peak
 - Chasm Lake - beyond hitch rack on Mills Moraine
 - Longs Peak - beyond Boulderfield hitch rack
5. Wild Basin
 - Bluebird Lake - beyond hitch rack
 - Box and Eagle Lake - from Thunder Lake trail
 - Lion Lakes - from Thunder Lake trail
6. Mummy Range
 - Lawn Lake trail - beyond hitch rack at east end of lake
 - Potts Puddle trail - from Lawn Lake trail to Cow Creek Divide
 - West Creek trail (Husted trail) - from North Boundary trail
7. West District
 - Specimen Mountain trail
 - Poudre River trail - Chapin Creek to Milner Pass
 - Chapin Creek trail - Poudre River to Chapin Pass
 - Paradise Park - beyond hitch rack
 - Lake of the Clouds - beyond hitch rack
 - Haynach Lake trail - beyond Tonahutu Creek trail
 - East Inlet trail - beyond west end of Lake Verna
 - North Inlet trail - beyond Lake Nanita
 - Lake Solitude - beyond North Inlet trail
 - Long Meadow; and all trails above the "Grand Ditch"

ROMO-168
11/74

Appendix F

BACKCOUNTRY SITE/ZONE PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL: _____

RATIONALE: _____

SUBMITTED BY: _____ DATE _____

RECOMMENDED BY: _____ DATE _____
Research Biologist or Resource Mgmt. Specialist

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE _____
Chief Park Ranger

PROPOSAL (Approved ___ Disapproved ___) returned to initiator DATE _____

Attach sketch of proposal. If new site, provide necessary information for Backcountry Office handout sheet.

BACKCOUNTRY PATROL REPORT

Patrol by _____

Date _____ Place and Time of Start _____

Place and Time of Return _____

Route Patroled _____

Miles Traveled - Trail: Foot _____ Horseback _____ Cross Country _____ Ski _____

Mountaineering Patrol: Peak _____ Route _____

Conditions of Mountaineering Route _____

Conditions of Trails _____

Signs and Registers _____

Campsites _____

Other _____

Cleanup Work Performed and Trail Hazards Removed _____

Number of Visitor Contacts (Include all visitors spoken to, also all members of a party present when one member is contacted) _____

Backcountry Use Permit _____ Fishing _____ Creel _____
Checked _____ Issued _____ License Checked _____ Census _____

Warnings:

Verbal No. _____ Offense(s) _____

Written No. _____ Offense(s) _____

Citations: No. _____ Offense(s) _____

Misc. Service to Visitors _____

Misc. Observations including Wildlife _____

Remarks (Specific Actions Recommended) _____

Prepared by _____ Date of Report _____

December 1974

GUIDELINES
BACKCOUNTRY PATROL
Rocky Mountain National Park

Preface: These guidelines are intended as a training aid and as a reference source for employees who have backcountry patrol responsibilities.

I. PATROL RANGER DUTIES

1. Instructional References. Every person assigned to backcountry patrol will have access to the Code of Federal Regulations (Title 36), Backcountry Permit Guidelines, Backcountry Horsemen's Guidebook, Trail Maintenance Handbook, Backcountry Management Plan, and a Nature Association reference book kit. These materials will be provided by your supervisor.

2. Responsibility of Trail Patrol.

a. Contact with Visitors. Persons on patrol should attempt verbal contact with every party encountered on the trail. They should be friendly and helpful in nature, with the primary objective being education and prevention of possible violations. If the people are obviously geared for an overnight trip, check to see if they have a backcountry permit. Ask them what they think about the backcountry permit system, the process of obtaining permits, and the reasons for the program.

If they have fishing tackle visible, ask them some tactful leading questions to see if they have a license and are aware of the regulations. If you are in a greenback cutthroat trout area be sure to emphasize that this trout is an endangered species and what waters are closed to all fishing activities. It is not enough to assume that they have been given full information on all aspects of their trip just because they were issued a permit. A useful tactic is to offer some form of helpful information; this almost always establishes the friendly rapport that we seek.

If the ranger patrol is horse-mounted, he should dismount if he intends to talk with the visitor to an extent greater than general greeting words or polite passing comments. This is to be done as a courtesy gesture, as much as to effect better control of the horse should the meeting place pose problems of passage or safety.

b. Trailside litter. A trash bag is a permanent extension of your arm when you are on trail patrol unless the trail is unusually clean. Pick up all visible litter or trash found along the trail. This sets a good example for the visitor.

c. Water bars. When on foot patrol (as opposed to horseback patrol) a shovel should be a normal part of your equipment and - depending upon other priorities in your workday - you should clean and repair as many water bars as you can each day while on patrol. Water sweeping down the trail and eroding the loosened material is the greatest single cause of trail damage in this area.

d. Signs. Signs are important ambassadors in the backcountry. We have to be continually on the alert to keep them in the best possible condition. Are they plumb? Do they give adequate information? Are there signs which are needed but have not been made available? Do we have two or three signs on one post making it look like a "sign tree"? Stop at trail junctions and observe people to see if they are confused and in need of different information than the signs give.

e. Party composition. Be sure to count each group encountered. If there are more than seven be sure they have a group camp permit. If there are more than 25 you obviously have a problem right away. If it is a horse party it should not exceed 20 horses. If a horse group is orderly, everything is fine. A good wrangler would keep his group together, with the last person in the string visible to him most of the time. Be familiar with the current conditions of the special use permit for the liveries. Usually they will require certain items of tack and may require a guide with each party.

f. Illegal campsite detection. Patrolmen should be alert for evidence of people leaving the trail or coming out of the woods from an illegal campsite. Be watchful for wisps of campfire smoke in places where there are no designated campsites. Even the smell of smoke may be the giveaway to an alert patrolman. Tracks ahead of you on the trail which suddenly disappear are a good indication that somebody has sneaked off the trail to camp in an unauthorized spot.

g. Fire ring obliteration. An obvious patrol duty is to eradicate any illegal campfire remains that you find. Scatter the rocks so they cannot be recovered to rebuild the ring. The rocks should be placed so the burn marks are not visible. Put the rocks back in their original depression if possible. In some instances it will be convenient to throw them into a nearby stream where they will soon be washed off. The charcoal should be scattered and/or spaded into the ground. Be sure to remove all tinfoil. Spading will hasten the recovery of plant growth. A deep layer of black charcoal will last for decades without any plant invasion. Patrol rangers should carry a small hand spade or a shovel.

h. General trail maintenance. In addition to water bar maintenance, patrolmen should remove obviously loose rocks which have rolled into the trail tread. Replace log or brush debris which the trail crew has placed in illegal switchback shortcut trails to try to stop people from shortcutting. Except during the early part of the season, foot patrolmen need not normally carry an axe. But if you have one, and encounter down logs, cut them out with the cut being made well off the trail so that, as the remaining tree trunk on the up-hill side slides downhill through the years, it will not need to be cut again. The marks of axe and saw should be kept as unobtrusive as possible. After you have cut a log it is desirable to try to hide the evidence of the cut by whatever means possible.

i. Law enforcement. Although the backcountry patrolman's primary objective in dealing with people is the prevention of possible violations, it would be a rare day's patrol that did not result in at least one encounter with a

violator of park regulations. The backcountry regulations are brought to the visitors' attention through verbal and written information acquired while obtaining camping permits, through signs and trailhead bulletin board material, and in ranger-visitor contacts. Observation of a violation, therefore, with very few exceptions, may necessitate the patrolman's issuing a citation. Examples of the instances when a written warning will suffice are (1) when the violator obviously entered the park unknowingly, where the boundary is poorly posted; or (2) when our signs or verbal information have been demonstrably misleading to the visitor, with the result that he is physically unable to find - or reach - the camping destination.

A patrolman may not, in the event of a "borderline" or suspected violation, ignore it. The very least law enforcement action should be the issuance of a written warning - if not the courtesy tag (Form 10-33), then simply a statement of the regulation, with the patrolman's signature, written on any piece of paper.

3. Duties at established campsites.

a. Public contact. Again, be sure to talk to users in the designated campsites. This will usually require that you "break the ice" and visit the area late in the day or early in the morning. Patrol rangers may well use a workday of 12 noon to 8 p.m. rather than 8 to 5, which usually results in their missing anyone actually using the campsite. Ask the campers if they had any trouble finding the designated sites. If they did, figure out a way to improve the situation by better maps, better signing or better location of the campsite markers, etc. If patrol is by horseback, do not bring your horse into the designated campsite; rather, tie it well outside the use area perimeter.

b. Cleaning of fire grates. If the area has fire grates, encourage campers to completely burn all their firewood and charcoal. The buildup of thick layers of charcoal is the result of dousing the campfire with water before the wood is completely consumed. If the wood is allowed to burn itself out completely at night it will leave nothing but white ashes which blow away. In the morning, campers should be encouraged to use small limbs and twigs so that the fire again can completely consume itself and not leave a water-drowned buildup of heavy charcoal. The patrolman should clean out the built-up charcoal by burning it or scattering it as well dispersed and as far away as is practicable. Be sure to remove the tinfoil before scattering it. The fire ring should be slightly sunken into the ground so that it does not move around and the user is not enticed to change its location. If there is a cluster of supplemental rocks around the fire ring, these should be removed and scattered.

c. Cleaning pit toilets. At present there are 41 pit toilets in the backcountry; six are the helicopter vault evacuation type. If you have pit toilets in your patrol area you should apply a "Bottomside" HITROL deodorant material within the pit three to four times during the summer season, depending on the amount of use. A "Topside" HITROL disinfectant will be used to clean the toilet stool weekly. These materials will be available from the warehouse. A canvas bucket and brush will be used in the cleaning process as necessary. The visitor will be expected to provide his own toilet tissue.

Dependent upon your area you may be expected to assist with the helicopter vault evacuation. Specific instructions will be issued in the field.

II. EVALUATING CAMPSITE LOCATION

General comment: Not all of our campsites are yet placed in the optimum location and, as time goes on and certain areas deteriorate from overuse, we may have to rotate some campsites. Patrolmen should keep the following objectives in mind:

1. Visibility from main thoroughfare. Designated campsites preferably should not be visible from the main trail. The goal is to have a small trail sign indicating the campsite is off the trail in a certain direction. There should be a slightly marked or established tread leading toward the campsite and it should be easily found by the average camper. He may or may not have a mimeographed location map with him.
2. Proximity to water. The campsite should be no closer than 50 feet nor farther away than 300 feet from the camping water supply.
3. Campsite marking. Obviously, the campsite should be marked with an arrowhead or a post site marker indicating that it is indeed an official campsite. This should apply whether there is a fire grate or if it is a "stoves only" area.
4. Damage from open fires. The patrolman should constantly assess the effects of open fires at each given campsite. At least 50% of the campsites in Rocky Mountain, particularly those at the high elevations or timberline sites, should be for stoves only. If the area is obviously being butchered extensively by firewood gathering, the patrolman should make recommendations for either relocating the campsite or closing it to open fires. At the same time we should recognize that a certain amount of evidence of firewood gathering should be tolerated in view of the immense social benefit of campfires. Generally if the campsite is out of sight of the trail and located in the heavy, continuous forest stands, the effects of wood gathering can be tolerated.
5. Body waste. This is a tough problem and one which no good patrolman should avoid. Solid human body waste can be tolerated around the campsite if it is well distributed and buried just slightly under the surface of the ground. Factors which tend to make it intolerable are having too many campsites in an area, selecting an area that does not have ample space around it for good distribution of human body waste, or by failure to provide a pit toilet if it is a heavily used area. Options for correction include (a) reducing the number of campsites in the area, (b) providing a pit toilet, or (c) relocating the entire campsite. If we have a pit toilet, the patrolman must clean it or see that it is cleaned each time he visits the area (see Section I.3.c.). If we cannot properly maintain a pit toilet we should eliminate it and go to one of the other options. As a general rule, a pit toilet is needed at a group site

or in the camping areas which experience more than 200 camper nights monthly. Eventually all pit toilet facilities will be the open top type.

Visitors should be encouraged to carry a small spade or some method of light digging. They should dig up a small, thin square of turf and set it to one side. After solid human wastes are deposited in the "cat hole" the turf should be replaced and packed down to prevent the invasion of flies or insects. Toilet tissue should be burned if a cat hole is not dug.

6. Non-destination sites. If we need to relocate the camping area or establish a new one, full consideration should be given to the new location: Is it a non-destination site? Rather than continuing to camp on the fragile shoreline of lakes, lake camping areas should be about a quarter of a mile away from the lake itself.

7. Campability. Is the site fairly level and well drained? Is it in an area less likely to be changed ecologically by human use? The best ecosystems for resistance to change in Rocky Mountain are the sandy-soiled, semi-level, forested areas with very little vegetation in a forest floor.

8. Sunlight. Is it exposed to the early-morning sunlight so people and the site can dry out after the normal night of heavy dew or rains which we experience in this area?

9. Lightning. Is it off of a ridge and out of probable lightning danger?

III. MINIMIZING HUMAN IMPACTS

General Comment: Since public education will be one of your primary duties, you should take this opportunity to discuss low impact wilderness camping techniques. When camping overnight you are also expected to be a low impact camper. Among the techniques to minimize human impacts on the resources are:

1. Methods of travel. Encourage visitors to travel abreast of each other when traveling cross-country, rather than in single file which tends to establish visible trails. In some areas it may be best to stay on the rocks or talus in order to avoid saturated soils or fragile ecosystems.

2. Footwear. While we may not be able to separate the great American public from lug-soled boots, campers should be encouraged to slip into a pair of tennis shoes or moccasins while in camp so that the vegetation is not cut up unnecessarily.

3. Sleeping. If visitors camp in one location more than one night they should be encouraged to move the tent daily so the vegetation is not destroyed. It is acknowledged that most of our designated sites are already trampled. Cross-country camping prohibits more than one day at a site.

4. Eating. Patrolmen should encourage people to use the type of foods and eating practices which are the least demanding upon the resource. We have passed the days of dutch ovens and big fire pits. Most people get along quite well with a small amount of water boiled on a self-contained stove to prepare lightweight foods. Ask people to carry out their aluminum foil; it cannot be burned in the campfire. The best method today is to bring out all food wrappers and containers in the plastic sack which all hikers should have with them. It is not necessary to wash cans or wrappings before bringing them out in plastic bags.

5. Firewood gathering. Axes and saws are problems for the visitor as well as the park. They are unnecessary extra weight and cause damage to the resources. Campers should be encouraged to gather their wood, dead and downed material without them.

6. Dishwashing. Novice backpackers must learn to use plain hot water or a very tiny amount of detergent and scatter the dishwater rather than digging a hole for it. An advanced camper will use only a metal cup which is washed by a final rinsing out with clear, hot water. Never wash yourself, dishes or clothes in streams or lakes. Stay at least 50 feet away.

7. Fish cleaning. The Code of Federal Regulations (Title 36) specifies that fish entrails or other inedible parts of fish may not be thrown into fresh waters or onto park area lands in areas of public concentration. It is recommended that these waste materials be scattered in the brush, well away from the campsite area. They will normally be consumed this same day by the wildlife in the area. If buried it will normally be dug up anyway. This practice should be monitored, however.

8. Garbage and trash. It's obvious that the camper must pack out anything not completely consumed by the fire. Let the novice know that the days of "burn, bash, and bury" were outdated over a decade ago.

9. Human body waste. See II.5.

10. Laundry. Ideally clothes washing should not be done in the backcountry; backpackers should carry extra, clean clothes, or simply live in what they wear.

IV. THE UNIFORM

The following items of uniform will be the official backcountry uniform and all patrolmen will be expected to have all those items necessary to carry out their particular job functions:

1. Hat, felt Stetson with hatband.
2. Trousers, denim jeans, forest green, J. C. Penney or Levis.
No wide flares, but boot flares or straight leg allowed.
3. Shirt, nickel gray, long-sleeved.
4. Parka, green, Sportscaster parka shell or downfilled.
5. Belt, cordovan, embossed leather, gold buckle.
6. Wool socks.
7. Appropriate hiking or climbing boots.
8. Name tag, gold.
9. Badge, gold, "NATIONAL PARK RANGER".

Optional: Sweater - gray, cardigan as inner garment only.

Poncho or raincoat, forest green.

Rain cover, Stetson.

As can be expected, the uniform will be worn in a neat and clean manner. You are a representative of the National Park Service.

V. SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

It will be many years before our backcountry management system is perfect. The best way to detect needed improvements is to constantly evaluate the system. Talk to the people. Have they been routed on their second night to a campsite which is impossible to reach in a moderate hiking day? Do we need another campsite in between the points or was it just a poor job of routing? Are the resources deteriorating? Should the sites be eliminated or relocated? Keep searching - keep evaluating. It's one of your most important functions as a backcountry ranger.

Your recommendations should be presented to your immediate supervisor. He may approve them immediately or he may forward them for approval. Recommendations for site obliteration, relocation, or establishment require clearance by the Chief Park Ranger.

BACKCOUNTRY MANAGEMENT
ACTION PLAN FOR 1975

In order to implement the recommendation of the backcountry management plan, specific proposals or projects need to be accomplished or initiated in 1975. They include the following:

1. Contact the local conservation groups; provide them with a copy of the backcountry management plan. Invite their participation in the committee meetings.
2. Establish liaison with the Forest Service relative to backcountry management; invite the local USFS representative to attend committee meetings.
3. Prepare special backcountry regulations; publish in the Federal Register.
4. Determine the constraints for site use early in the season; close those areas where soil moisture is excessive.
5. Designate an additional 38 non-destination campsites; provide with necessary facilities. Complete network of group camps.
6. Continue to analyze designated sites for conversion from wood fire use to stoves only; objective is to establish a 50-50 ratio.
7. Gather day use data; evaluate methods to control or regulate excessive use.
8. Complete installation of 4-sided maze, open-top pit toilets at sites having more than 200 camper days/month or in those areas with an inadequate disposal area.
9. Convert the closed pit toilet type (17) to the 4-sided maze, open-top type as funding becomes available.
10. Initiate the wilderness exam/card on an experimental basis; seek voluntary participation.
11. Seek funds for additional backcountry patrol staffing; increase monitoring of crosscountry zones.
12. Monitor winter use to identify any water pollution or other camping problems.
13. Identify a horse trail system; restrict trail widening to this network.
14. Schedule training sessions for backcountry and trail personnel. Monitor activities to determine need for subsequent training.

