



United States Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION

*Restoring, Enhancing and Sustaining Forests in California, Hawaii and the Pacific Islands*

Sierra National Forest

# Ansel Adams Wilderness Bass Lake Ranger District

The Ansel Adams Wilderness is a diverse and spectacular area comprised of 228,500 acres draped along the crest of the Sierra Nevada within the Sierra and Inyo National Forests. This wilderness ecosystem includes a number of lake and stream systems that are the headwaters of the San Joaquin River. Vegetation is mixed coniferous and deciduous forests of pine and oak in low elevation, and sub-alpine forests of lodgepole pine, mountain hemlock and red fir. Alpine meadows grace the higher elevations with wildflowers and crystal streams.

Elevations range from hot dry canyons at 3,500 feet in the San Joaquin River gorge to 13,157 foot Mount Ritter. Precipitation is from 18 to 50 inches, with snow depth averages about 171 inches.

The John Muir Trail, which starts in Yosemite National Park, crosses Donahue Pass (11,056 feet), into the Ansel Adams Wilderness and south through the Mono and Mammoth Ranger Districts on the east side of the Sierra crest. This portion of trail is part of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. There are hundreds of miles of trail offering access to other wilderness areas including Yosemite and Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Parks.

**FISHING/TERRAIN**

The Ansel Adams Wilderness has good stream and lake fishing that include Rainbow, golden and eastern brook trout.

The Ritter Range affords challenges for experienced mountain climbers with several small glaciers under its rugged peaks.

Southern portions of the Wilderness provide forests of huge pine and fir where few people visit.

Highway 41 and 168 access western slope trailheads while Highways 120 (Tioga Pass through Yosemite National Park) and Highway 395 access trailheads on the East side of the Sierra.

Commercial pack stations provide services from Agnew and Reds Meadow (Inyo National Forest) on the eastern side of the range, and from Miller Meadow and Florence and Edison Lakes (Sierra National Forest) on the western slope.

**REGULATIONS AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS**

A wilderness Visitor Permit is required for all overnight trips into the wilderness. Important travel information is available concerning bear encounters, fire danger, current weather, snow and hazard conditions, and to assist visitors in understanding how to properly use the wilderness and leave no trace. Visit [www.fs.usda.gov/sierra](http://www.fs.usda.gov/sierra) for recreation information and wilderness reservation application.

Many trailheads are so popular that daily quotas on entry have been in effect since 1969 and are in effect May 1 through October 31.

To practice **Leave No Trace**, following these simple practices:

- Maximum 15 people and 25 head of stock.
- Camp at least 100 feet away from water sources and trails.
- Bury human waste in a hole 6 to 8 inches deep and over 100 feet away from any water source.



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[www.fs.usda.gov/sierra](http://www.fs.usda.gov/sierra)

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- Use a stove for cooking.
- Avoid constructing new fire rings, and go without an open fire in remote areas.
- Stay on the main trail tread and don't shortcut switchbacks.
- Pack out all trash, including paper and food scraps.
- Purify all water for human use.
- Use soap for bathing and washing **only** when you're at least 100 feet away from any water source.

For trails originating in the Sierra National Forest  
**west of the San Joaquin River**  
 please contact:

Sierra National Forest  
 Bass Lake Ranger District  
 57003 Road 225  
 North Fork, CA 93643  
 559-877-2218 ext. 0  
[www.fs.usda.gov/sierra](http://www.fs.usda.gov/sierra)

For trails originating in the Sierra National Forest  
**east of the San Joaquin River**  
 Please contact:

Sierra National Forest  
 High Sierra Ranger District  
 29688 Auberry Road  
 Prather, CA 93651  
[www.fs.usda.gov/sierra](http://www.fs.usda.gov/sierra)

For all trails originating  
**North of the San Joaquin River**  
 Please contact:

Inyo National Forest  
 Mammoth Ranger District  
 P.O. Box 148  
 Mammoth Lake, CA 93546  
[www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov)

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