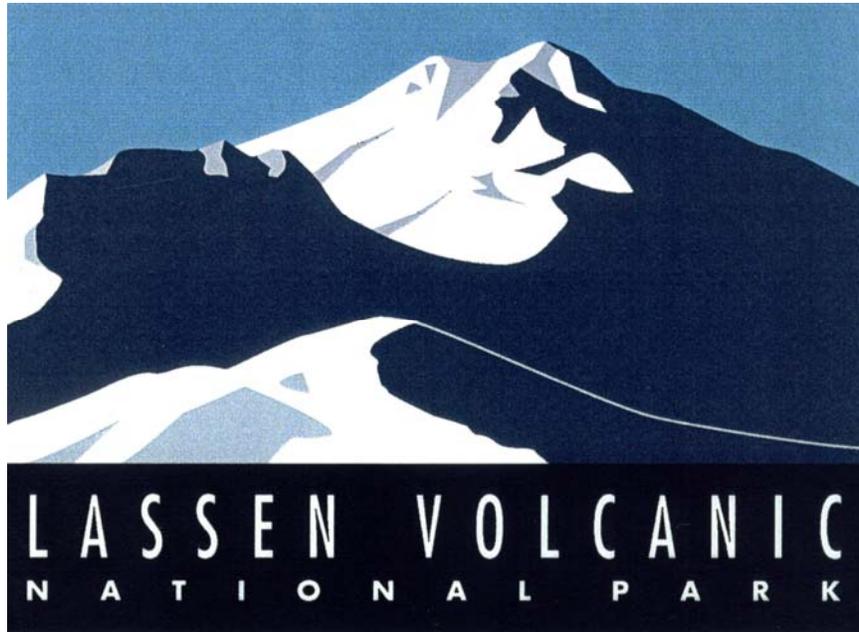


LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK

**COMMERCIAL SERVICES PLAN
AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

June 2005



Summary

The NPS is assessing the commercial services program at Lassen Volcanic National Park to determine the levels and types of necessary and appropriate commercial services operating at the park and the most effective and efficient methods to manage those activities. The scope of this planning effort includes all existing and potential commercial services at the park for the next 5 to 10 years. This Commercial Services Plan is an implementation plan. As such, all proposals made and all subsequent commercial activities at Lassen Volcanic National Park must comply with applicable laws and regulations and be consistent with the mission and goals established for the park by Congress and higher level planning documents such as the General Management Plan (NPS 2003).

The Concessions Policy Act (PL 88-577) guided management of concession services by the NPS for about 30 years. In 1998, Congress passed the NPS concessions Management Improvement Act (PL 105-391) which supercedes the previous law. The new law incorporates many of the conditions of the old law but some significant changes were made. The NPS has written new regulations to implement the new law.

The NPS has several commercial services authorization instruments available to use to manage commercial services at Lassen Volcanic National Park. Concession contracts are used to manage commercial services that are assigned land and/or facilities in the park. Because of this commitment of park resources, these commercial activities must be necessary as well as an appropriate use of the park. Other commercial services begin and end outside the park but the activity takes place in the park, such as guide and instructional services. These activities have been managed with an Incidental Business Permit (IBP). Under the new law they will be managed by an essentially the same but new instrument, a Commercial Use Authorization (CUA). Many activities occur in a park that have a commercial aspect but do not fit neatly into the above categories. These unique or one-time activities are usually issued a Special Use Permit and include activities such as commercial filming, rights-of-way, and special events like festivals and weddings.

The commercial services program at Lassen Volcanic National Park includes one concession contract, which is currently with California Guest Services, Inc. (current contract will expire October 31, 2005) to provide visitor services at Manzanita Lake campground, the Southwest entrance area, and Drakesbad Guest Ranch. A new concession contract is expected to be awarded by March, 2006. In 2004 the park issued 15 IBPs to provide services such as guiding and bus tours. In addition, Lassen Loomis Museum Association operates under a cooperative agreement wherein they are permitted to sell educational and interpretive materials in specific areas of the park. One park employee manages the commercial services program as a collateral duty.

This Commercial Services Plan is an implementation plan and therefore must be consistent with the established planning direction for the park and achieve the desired future conditions or goals for the park. The mission for Lassen Volcanic National Park is to “conserve, preserve, and protect Lassen Volcanic National Park and its geological, biological, and cultural resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of present and future generations.” The goal of the Commercial Services Plan is to provide visitors with quality, necessary and appropriate services, while at the same time supporting the Park’s mission.

This proposal identifies two alternatives: 1) The no-action alternative and 2) the preferred alternative. The no-action alternative proposes to maintain all existing activities, services, and facilities with a management strategy similar to the existing strategy. The preferred alternative also maintains all of the

existing activities, services, and facilities, but it also provides for greater protection of resources, enhanced visitor experience, and more detailed management actions that would be necessary to implement the commercial services direction established in the General Management Plan.

The impact topics that are related to the two alternatives are: soils and visitor experience. These topics are assessed in this environmental assessment for the potential environmental consequences that could result from the implementation of each of the two alternatives.

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PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PLAN

The purpose of this Commercial Services Plan is to provide a process for establishing the types and levels of commercial activities necessary and/or appropriate for Lassen Volcanic National Park, and the most effective and efficient method for the NPS to manage those activities. This plan will provide a comprehensive guide for managing commercial services in Lassen Volcanic National Park for five to ten years, and will address in more detail decisions regarding commercial activities that were determined necessary in the General Management Plan (NPS 2003).

Commercial activities in the park that will be managed by the implementation of this plan include contracts, permits, and special use authorizations. By law (36 CFR 5.3), all commercial activities that occur within a park must be authorized by some written agreement. Park concessions are contracted visitor services determined to be necessary and appropriate because most often they involve a land or facility assignment inside the park, although not always. Other commercial activities such as guide and instructional services originate and end outside the park but use park resources. These are generally authorized by Commercial Use Authorizations (CUA), which were previously known as Incidental Business Permits (IBP). Special Use Permits authorize “one-time” and quasi-commercial events and activities such as rights-of-ways, commercial filming, weddings, festivals, and other special events. Also, the Lassen Loomis Museum Association has a cooperative agreement with the park to sell educational and interpretive materials in specific locations within the park.

The NPS must determine what types of commercial activities are necessary or appropriate at Lassen Volcanic National Park. The *National Park Service Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998* mandates that concession development and services at Lassen Volcanic National Park, and all NPS units, be both necessary and appropriate to the park in which they are located because they usually involve a commitment of resources. Other authorized commercial activities need only be appropriate. All commercial activities must operate in a manner that is consistent with the mission of Lassen Volcanic National Park. That is to say, all commercial activities operating within the park should provide high quality visitor experiences while protecting important natural, cultural, and scenic resources. The General Management Plan and other planning documents identified that the park mission or purpose is to conserve, preserve, and protect Lassen Volcanic National Park and its geological, biological, and cultural resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of present and future generations.

The NPS must also determine what levels of commercial use are appropriate. As mandated by law, all use, including commercial, must be managed to protect park resources. The NPS uses the Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP) process to manage use and thus protect resources and enhance visitor experience. The General Management Plan accomplished only the initial steps toward implementation of the VERP Program at Lassen Volcanic National Park by establishing management zone prescriptions or “managing within carrying capacity”. It qualitatively identified the resource conditions and visitor experiences appropriate for each zone in terms like “pristine resources” and “low probability of encounters”. Eventually, the VERP process will establish quantitative limits for all use and determine the appropriate allocation of commercial use within those limits.

This plan must address how commercial activities in Lassen Volcanic National Park should best be managed. The Chief of Administration, as a collateral duty, currently performs commercial service management. The Revenue and Fee Business Coordinator, under the supervision of the Chief of Administration, provides coordination of Commercial Use Authorizations, Special Use Permits, and Commercial Filming Permits. Cooperating Association activities are coordinated by the Chief of

Interpretation and Cultural Resources. Given the complexity of the commercial services program at Lassen Volcanic National Park this is barely adequate staffing to accomplish the workload. It is imperative, therefore, that the commercial services program be set up for maximum management efficiency and effectiveness.

Lassen Loomis Museum Association operates under a Memorandum of Agreement. Commercial Use Authorizations are reissued ever year or two. Before any commercial activity is advertised or renewed the NPS must ensure that the types of authorized use are still necessary and/or appropriate; levels of use are consistent with resource protection and quality visitor experience; and the program can be managed in an efficient and effective manner given staffing constraints. The NPS must also ensure that all commercial activities comply with applicable federal, state, local and agency laws, regulations, and policies.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

A Commercial Services Plan is an implementation plan. It must be developed with public input and comply with all applicable laws and policies. It should also be consistent with the basic management philosophies established in higher level plans such as the General Management Plan (NPS 2003) and Strategic Plan (NPS 2003b). These plans identify the mission, purpose, and significance of the park. They also identify goals or desired future conditions for the park. All subsequent plans and actions must fall within the limits established in these higher plans and work towards achieving the goals identified. Implementation plans provide the details of how specific areas of park operations, such as commercial services, resource management, interpretation, and development, will achieve park goals within the limits established.

The first half of this document provides legal, policy, and planning information that has a direct effect on the management of commercial activities at Lassen Volcanic National Park. Information about what tools are available to manage commercial services and existing condition information about resources, visitor use, and current commercial activity is also provided. This information is the basis for the plan. All proposals must comply with laws, regulations, and policies and fall within the planning framework for Lassen Volcanic National Park.

The second half of the document takes the information about where the park is and where the park desires to be and presents alternative ways to get there that are consistent with laws, policies, and the purpose of the park. The impacts of those actions are then assessed.

Public input for this plan is critical to ensure the correct types and amounts of commercial services are available at Lassen Volcanic National Park. The public is encouraged to review the first half of the document to better understand the planning framework limits and constraints and comment on the direction. You are also encouraged to comment on the two alternative ways identified to achieve the goals of Lassen Volcanic National Park.

PARK SETTING

Location and Access

Lassen Volcanic National Park, established in 1916, is located in northeastern California in portions of Shasta, Lassen, Plumas, and Tehama counties (See Vicinity/Location Maps). The 106,372-acre park is located about fifty miles east of both Red Bluff and Redding and is within a day's drive of the Sacramento and San Francisco Bay metropolitan areas. The park is accessible from Interstate 5 to the west via State Routes 36 and 44. From Reno, Nevada and Interstate 80, the park is accessible from US Highway 395 and State Routes 36 and 44.

All services including food, lodging, camping, commercial centers, and automotive services are available at Red Bluff, Redding, and Susanville, about 50 miles away. Most services are available in the town of Chester, about 25 miles west of the park. Chester is also the access point to the Drakesbad Guest Ranch developed area within the park. Limited visitor services are available at the small communities near the park including Mineral, Mill Creek, and Viola.

Air transportation with rental car service is available in Redding, Sacramento, and Reno. There is no scheduled bus service to the park.

There are two main entrances to the park in the northwest and southwest corners connected by the main park road that goes around the east flank of Lassen Peak. The main park road is closed in winter between the Southwest Entrance Station and Manzanita Lake Ranger Station due to snow. There is unpaved road access to Butte Lake in the northeast and Juniper Lake in the southeast corners of the park. A paved county road from Chester goes up the Warner Valley. Near the park boundary the road becomes unpaved and ends at the Drakesbad Guest Ranch. The park has an extensive trail system including portions of the Pacific Crest Trail.

Natural Resources

Lassen Volcanic National Park is an outstanding example of a dynamic geologic landscape. Lassen Peak erupted over a six-year period between 1914 and 1921. Preserved within the park is the site of the most recent volcanic eruption within the continental United States, prior to the Mount Saint Helens eruption of May, 1980. Lassen Peak is one of the largest plug dome volcanoes in the world. The park is unique in that it also preserves, in a relatively small geographic area, examples of the three other types of volcanoes recognized by geologists: shield volcanoes, composite volcanoes, and cinder cones.

Three biogeographic regions come together in Lassen Volcanic National Park: the southern Cascade Mountain Range, the northern Sierra Nevada Mountains, and the Basin and Range Province. The overlap of plant species commonly associated with each area, combined with the variety of geologic formations and textural compositions of lava, contribute to a high diversity of native plants in these communities. The natural environment in this rich area includes conifer forests, volcanic formations with rocky exposed areas, hydrothermal areas, riparian corridors, lakes, streams, chaparral hillsides, and meadows. It provides shelter and sustenance to a variety of resident and migratory wildlife. In 1972, Congress designated 78,982 acres as Wilderness in Lassen Volcanic National Park.

Wilderness

In October 1972, Congress designated 75% of the park (78,982 acres) as the Lassen Volcanic Wilderness. The 2003 General Management Plan for Lassen Volcanic National Park proposes an additional 25,000 acres be included for wilderness designation. Parkland proposed for wilderness expansion is currently managed as natural areas with the objective of protecting and conserving the natural and cultural resources found within

these areas. National Park Service wilderness management policies are based on provisions of the 1916 National Park Service Organic Act, the 1964 Wilderness Act, and legislation establishing individual units of the national park system. These policies establish consistent servicewide direction for the preservation, management, and use of wilderness and prohibit the construction of roads, buildings and other man-made improvements and the use of motorized vehicles in wilderness. All park management activities proposed within wilderness are subject to review following the minimum requirement and minimum tool concepts and decision guidelines.

Wilderness use at Lassen includes such activities as hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, swimming and fishing in the summer, and winter cross country skiing and snowshoeing. The average annual overnight wilderness use in the park is approximately 7,750 person nights per year. There is approximately 150 miles of trail and 15 trail bridges within the park's wilderness. The park includes portions of two Congressionally designated trails, the Nobles Emigrant Trail, a component of the California National Historic Trail, and the border-to-border Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. There are three historic structures maintained within the wilderness: Mt. Harkness Fire Lookout, and Twin Lakes and Horseshoe Lake patrol cabins.

Cultural Resources

Lassen Volcanic National Park contains cultural resources that are diverse and reflect a history of human activity extending at least 8,000 years. These resources include 101 archeological sites, 84 historic structures and features, 11 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (others are eligible for nomination), 6 identified cultural landscapes, thousands of museum objects, a large volume of archives, and a portion of the Nobles Emigrant Trail. The Lassen Volcanic region has been a home to the Atsugewi, Mt. Maidu, Yahi and Yana Indians, as well as European settlers.

Visitation and Visitor Use

The park has averaged about 380,000 visits per year for the last 10 years. Although the park is open year-round, access through the park on the main road is usually only available from June through October due to heavy snowfall. The four-month period between June and September typically accounts for nearly 80 percent of the annual visitation. Substantial drops in visitation can occur during years of early road closure and late spring road openings due to snow. In the year 2004, 15 commercial buses entered the park, 11 of which came during the summer months.

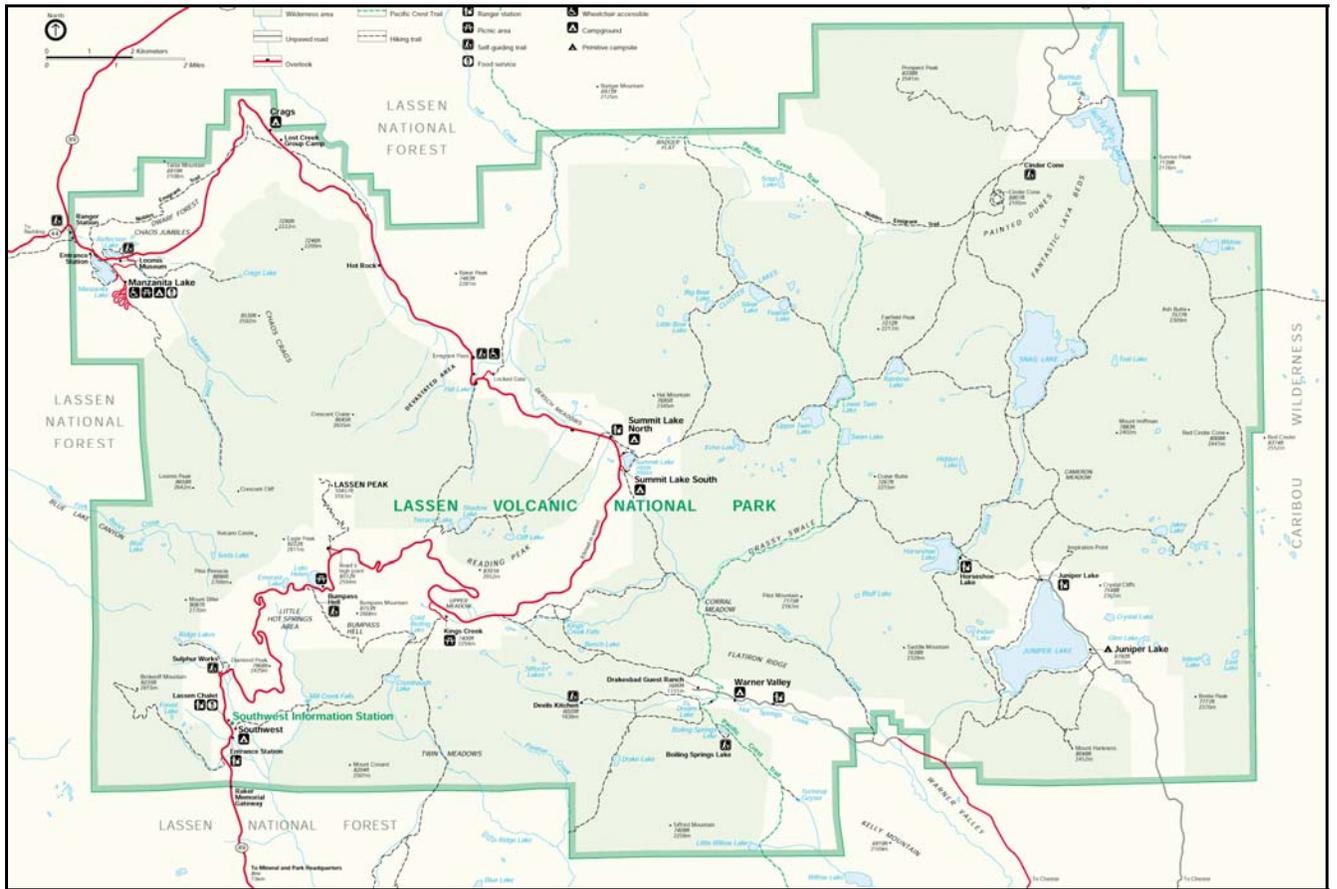
The majority of visitors to Lassen Volcanic National Park are touring the region. They spend about a half-day driving through the park and stopping at interpretive attractions. While it is not considered a destination park, approximately 25 percent of visitors stay overnight in the park. A much larger majority stay overnight outside the park in a nearby community. There are several campgrounds and commercial lodging at Drakesbad. The park provides a total of 485 individual sites and 15 group campsites in seven campgrounds. During Fiscal Year 2004, 13,159 visitor nights (number of campers multiplied by the number of nights stayed) were recorded at Manzanita Lake, which is the park's most heavily used campground.

Lassen Volcanic National Park has superlative backcountry and wilderness. An average of 7,600 overnight stays per year have occurred in the backcountry over the last 10 years. This trend is steady. The guest ranch at Drakesbad consistently operates at near full capacity during the summer season, averaging about 5,500 overnight stays per year for the last 10 years. The clientele at Drakesbad tend to be repeat visitors that have been coming back generation after generation for many years.

VICINITY MAP



LOCATION MAP



GUIDING LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES

All activities at Lassen Volcanic National Park are governed by the 1916 Organic Act that created the NPS and congressional and presidential authorizing actions taken specifically for the park. Laws specific to Lassen Volcanic National Park can be found in the 2003 *General Management Plan*.

In addition, there are several laws and policies that deal directly with commercial activities in parks. Regulations with specific instructions on commercial authorizations are located at 36 *Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 51*. The regulations state that all commercial activities in national parks must be authorized by some written agreement.

The Omnibus Park Management Act of 1998 was passed by Congress and signed into law November 13, 1998. The *National Park Service Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998 (PL 105-391)* is the short title for Section IV of the Omnibus Act and deals directly with NPS commercial services. This legislation supercedes the Concessions Policy Act, which guided Park Service management of concessions for 30 years. The new legislation incorporates much of the philosophy of the old law including "...development...shall be limited to those accommodations, facilities, and services that are necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment of the unit of the National Park System in which they are located and are consistent to the highest practicable degree with the preservation and conservation of the resources and values of the unit." In addition, the secretary of the interior should "...exercise his authority in a manner consistent with a reasonable opportunity for the concessioner to realize a profit." Thus, only economically feasible concession operations should be introduced. The intent of Congress with the new law was to increase competition for concessions in parks and increase the return to the government.

Consistent with this intent, the new law makes some significant changes. Under the Concessions Policy Act all existing concessioners had a "preferential right of renewal". Under Section 403 of PL 105-391 only guide services and small business operations with anticipated gross receipts under \$500,000 will be given a right of preference in renewal of contracts. All other concession contracts will be competitively awarded. The Concessions Policy Act typically authorized contracts for a 20 year term with some contracts having up to a 30 year term. The term of new contracts will normally be 5 to 10 years, with 20-year contracts only issued in special financial investment situations and only with approval from the NPS Director. Under the old law when a concessioner made a capital investment or improvement in facilities they received a Possessory Interest in the facility. This has been changed to Leasehold Surrender Interest which allows for capital investments and a process for extinguishing the interest through a formula involving inflation and depreciation. Under the old law, all franchise fees paid by a concessioner were sent to the United States General Treasury. Under the new law, all franchise fees stay with the Park Service to be used for visitor service or resource protection projects. The park that collects the fees retains 80% and 20% is used servicewide. Regulations to implement the new law as it pertains to concessions have been written, reviewed by the public, and approved. New standard contract language has also been written and approved.

Two other significant changes affect the authorization tools available to the Park Service. Concession Permits were used for less complex operations. They are discontinued and replaced with a three tiered concession contract system that reflects the complexity of the operation (see the concession contract description below). Incidental Business Permits (IBPs) authorized use by commercial operators when the business begins and ends outside the park but the park is used for the business activity. The authority to do this was under the Organic Act with regulations published in 36 CFR 5.3. Incidental Business Permits

have been replaced with Commercial Use Authorizations (CUAs) that are authorized in PL 105-391. Incidental Business Permit regulations did not allow for the limitation of the number of permits issued. PL 105-391 gives the NPS the authority to limit the number of Commercial Use Authorizations issued if needed for resource protection reasons. The Park Service is developing regulations to implement how CUAs will be limited and issued. Until the regulations are approved the Park Service has issued interim guidelines for issuing CUAs.

The *Cost Recovery Act (16 USC 3a)* requires the NPS to recover the cost of providing services to business permittees. The cost is defined as the amount expended by the NPS in order to accommodate commercial use. It includes the cost of processing and administering the permit and monitoring the activities allowed in the permit for compliance with conditions and stipulations. Administration costs can be averaged but monitoring costs must be itemized, actual costs.

According to *NPS Management Policies*, commercial activities are conducted under safeguards that protect against unregulated and indiscriminate use and ensure that heavy visitation does not impair park values and resources. Concessions in park units should be viewed as a tool of management to be used, when necessary and appropriate, to achieve the objectives of the park unit. Historically, the concessions program has been based on considerations such as visitor needs, the agency's ability to satisfy those needs, the resource itself, and the apparent carrying capacity. Changing conditions and increasing pressure to meet visitor needs requires a strategy that balances visitor needs with the purposes and values of individual parks.

The NPS guidelines, known as Directors Orders (DO) that are applicable to commercial services include:

- DO-48 *Concessions Guidelines*
- DO-50 *Loss Control Management Program Guideline*
- DO-53 *Special Park Use*
- DO-83 *Public Health Management Guideline*

These guidelines, along with laws and policies, standard contract language, and operating procedures, are used in managing commercial activities throughout the national park system.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES AUTHORIZATION INSTRUMENTS

Concession Contracts

All concession operations must be approved and authorized by the NPS under delegation of authority through the preparation of a prospectus (solicitation of offers), NPS review of proposals, selection of the best offer, and final contract execution. The procedures are detailed in 36 CFR, 51.4.

Concession contracts are legal agreements between the secretary of the interior (or authorized delegate)

and a concessioner that requires the concessioner to provide certain visitor accommodations, facilities, or services in the parks. Some services are required and must be provided. Others are authorized and can be provided. Category I concession contracts are usually used for large, complex operations where there is land and/or facilities assigned and the concessioner is making capital improvements which means there is leasehold surrender interest. Category II concession contracts are usually used for large, complex operations with land/facility assignments but there is no capital improvement program or leasehold surrender interest. Category III concession contracts are usually used for less complex operations without land/facility assignments or leasehold surrender interest. By law, all contracts are issued by competitive bid. The typical term for a contract is 5 to 10 years although under certain financial situations where a large capital investment is involved a 20-year term can be authorized with specific approval from the NPS director.

Concession contracts do not include a preferential right of renewal except for guide services or operators with annual gross receipts less than \$500,000. Concessioners are no longer given a preferential right of refusal for new or similar services. It is possible to have multiple concessioners offering the same service. When a concessioner makes capital improvements to a NPS facility or builds a new facility they acquire a leasehold surrender interest in the facility until the interest is extinguished, acquired by a new concessioner or bought out by the government.

Under the terms and conditions of a concession contract, the secretary has the authority to assign land and government improvements (facilities) to the concessioner as necessary and appropriate for conduct of operations. Concession contracts contain an operations plan, maintenance plan, environmental plan, and, in some cases, capital improvement plans. They require care of land and government improvements provided by the NPS to the concessioner. Compliance with the plans is mandatory.

Financial functions associated with issuing and managing concession contracts include economic feasibility studies and ensuring a fair return to the government. General standards are set for calculation of financial returns to the United States and affirm that revenue production is subordinate to resource protection and visitor services.

Commercial Use Authorizations (Incidental Business Permits)

Commercial Use Authorizations (CUAs) are replacing Incidental Business Permits (IBPs) as authorized in PL 105-391. IBPs were used to authorize commercial operations outside a park to use the park as part of their businesses. There are two types of CUAs. One authorizes services that begin and end outside of the park as did IBPs. All financial transactions and advertising must take place outside of the park. Exclusive authority to provide services is not provided. Activities do not have to be necessary but must be an appropriate use in the park. There is no assignment of land or facilities. The term of the permit is 1 or 2 years. A fee can be charged for the permit to recover the cost to the government to administer the permit. An example would be guide services, motorcoach tours, and recreational tours. The other type of CUA authorizes small business to occur in the park. Transactions are allowed and annual revenues are limited. No facilities are assigned. An example would be firewood sales from a vehicle.

Monitoring of all commercial activities is essential to ensure that business operations are conducted in a safe, fair, and reputable manner consistent with the mission of the park. Monitoring is also essential to ensure compliance with resource protection conditions stated in the permit. Where carrying capacities exist in parks to manage use, monitoring ensured compliance.

The NPS is authorized by the Cost Recovery Act to collect all costs associated with CUAs. There are

three elements to the determination of the dollar amount that can be charged: application, administrative, and monitoring costs. Application costs start with the request for the use of park resources and end with mailing the application form. Administrative costs start when the completed application form is received and end with the final signing of the permit. Monitoring costs start when the permittee arrives in the park to perform the permitted use and end when the permitted use is over and the permittee leaves the area. Application and administrative costs can be determined using average costs derived from historic records, but monitoring costs have to reflect actual itemized costs.

PL 105-391 allows the Park Service to limit the number of CUAs it issues for a particular activity for resource protection reasons. This is essentially a function of the carrying capacity of the resource. Limitations must be based on the rationale of carrying capacity. The Park Service is currently defining the process it will use to establish, issue, and manage limited CUAs through the regulatory process. When the regulations are reviewed and approved they will be implemented. Interim guidelines have been issued to facilitate the transition from IBPs to CUAs until the regulations are approved.

Cooperating Associations

Congress authorized cooperating associations in 1946. Their mission is to support park interpretive and scientific activities through proceeds from the sale of educational and interpretive materials in a park, which is a commercial activity. As non-profit organizations the proceeds from this commercial activity go back to the parks, after expenses. They are usually assigned space in a visitor center or other visitor contact facility. Cooperating associations are authorized by a cooperative agreement. The agreement only authorizes the sale of educational and interpretive materials. If it is appropriate for an association to sell convenience or other items, such as in remote locations where it is not economically feasible for a concessioner to provide the service, another authorization such as a concessions contract can be issued for the sale of those items. Cooperating associations are managed by a servicewide set of criteria and policies, NPS Director's Order #32.

Friends Groups

Friends groups are non-profit groups established to support parks, often monetarily, through fund raising and other events. They are not authorized by the Park Service although the partner relationship is usually welcome. Two commercially related issues are associated with friends groups, fund raising inside the park and the accountability of the donated funds. As a commercial activity, fund raisers must be authorized appropriately. The Park Service has established guidelines for financial reporting and disclosure by friends groups and compliance is mandatory.

Special Use Permits

Special events may be authorized under permit by the Superintendent subject to the same criteria as other special park uses provided there is a meaningful association between the purpose of the park and the event and the event contributes to visitor understanding of the significance of the park.

A Superintendent may approve a request for a special event if it is determined that:

- It will not conflict with law or policy
- It will not be a derogation of the values and purposes for which the park was established

- It is consistent with the park's enabling legislation
- It does not have reasonable potential to cause illness, personal injury, or property damage
- It will not unduly interfere with normal park operations, resource protection, or visitor use

The NPS will not permit the staging of special events that are conducted primarily for the material or financial benefit of participants or that involve commercialization, advertising, or publicity by participants. Events for which a separate public admission fee is to be charged, unless the event is directly related to the purposes for which the park was established, will not be permitted either. In addition, the NPS will not sponsor or issue permits for special events conducted in wilderness areas if those events might be inconsistent with the protection of wilderness resources and values.

The NPS will recover costs incurred in administering permits and monitoring the activities it authorizes. It will also establish and collect permit fees authorized by applicable legislation, regulations, and policies.

Special Use Permits are not covered by the new NPS concession legislation. Separate regulations for the management of Special Use Permits can be found in 36 CFR 1.6. Guidelines for the issuance of Special Use Permits are provided by NPS-53. The guidelines include NPS policy and instructions regarding Commercial Filming and Photography, Special Events, Rights-of-Way, and Use and Occupancy permits.

Commercial Film Permits

It is the policy of the NPS (NPS-21) to allow commercial filming and photography when it is consistent with the protection and public enjoyment of park resources. The regulations used to manage commercial filming are contained in 36 CFR 5.5. The NPS has the authority and responsibility to manage, permit, and/or deny filming projects consistent with the following principles:

- Natural, cultural, wilderness, and recreational resources will be protected
- Activity will not unduly conflict with the public's normal use and enjoyment of a park
- Visitors using cameras and /or recording devices for their own personal use are generally exempt from film permit requirements
- Coverage of breaking news never requires a permit, but it is subject to the imposition of restrictions and conditions necessary to protect park resources and public health and safety, and to prevent derogation of park values
- The NPS will not censor the content of any project, nor require finished film products for review, files, or documentation purposes

Commercial filming programs in parks are usually managed as a special park use with full cost recovery. Applicants reimburse the park for all costs related to meetings, location scouting, development of permit stipulations, and on-site monitoring of film projects. Each film project usually has a unique set of conditions developed to ensure that park resources are protected and that filming activities does not impact other park visitors.

Rights-Of-Way

The NPS is under congressional mandate not to allow any use of NPS land that would be a derogation of the values and purposes for which the park was authorized or be incompatible with the public interest, except when authorized by Congress. The regulations used to manage rights-of-way are found in 36 CFR

14.

Park Service policy (NPS-53) states that no permits for new, widened, or lengthened right-of-ways will be issued in designated or proposed wilderness. Right-of-ways for new gas or oil pipelines will not be issued anywhere in a national park area. When undocumented utility lines exist in a park, if the park allows the line to remain, a right-of-way permit must be prepared and submitted for final execution by the Superintendent. Appropriate conditions and stipulations are placed in any right-of-way permit to protect resources, if warranted.

The Park Service will recover all costs incurred to issue the right-of-way permit and monitor any activity associated with the permit. Fees paid by the permit holder for the use of the government land go directly to the United States Treasury.

Other Authorizations

In 1982 the NPS established the Historic Leasing Program to lease historic structures and agricultural land to individuals and organizations. The program was designed to spur rehabilitation and reuse of designated historic structures and federally owned lands. Any proceeds from these leases were to be used to maintain, repair, and preserve historic properties and to defray the costs of administering the leasing program. This is a commercial activity authorized by a lease.

Some park units have special legislation that allows commercial activity and/or commercial support of activities. For instance, many parks have private inholdings or lifetime lease arrangements for private dwellings within the park boundary. These inholdings could be commercial in nature and/or require commercial support for delivery of goods and services. These types of commercial activities are often authorized by special written agreements that outline conditions, insurance requirements, and other pertinent information.

EXISTING COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Commercial Services Program

The commercial services program at Lassen Volcanic National Park includes evaluating concessioner performance, approving rates charged by the concessioner based on an analysis of comparable prices in the private sector, safety inspections, public health oversight, and responding to questions and concerns from the public and from businesses. In addition, with a varying degree of assistance, it includes preparation of all contracts, permits, and the associated conditions/stipulations documents.

Concessions management at Lassen Volcanic National Park is currently a collateral duty preformed by the Chief of Administration. The Revenue and Fee Business Coordinator administers the Incidental Business Permit/Commercial Use Authorization program. The Chief of Interpretation and Cultural Resources serves as liaison with the cooperating association and the park's friends group. Other staff including protection, interpretation, cultural and natural resources, and maintenance assist in monitoring use and resources as they relate to commercial activities. Final approval of all contracts and permits remains with the Office of the Superintendent. Protection rangers are prepared to address violations of the Code of Federal Regulations as necessary in the field.

The Chief of Administration conducts the quarterly inspection program for the concession contract and is also responsible for monitoring the concessioner's Maintenance Plan, Operations Plan, Environmental Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, Risk Management Plan, Recycle Program, etc. This position is the point of contact and maintains a working relationship with the concessioner, preparing documentation for rate approvals, park-specific contract language, and the annual report. All concession related correspondence is accomplished through this position.

The Revenue and Fee Business Coordinator issues all IBP/CUAs and collects associated fees. The park charges a \$50 permit fee and a \$50 monitoring fee. Most permits are issued on an annual basis. This position also monitors or coordinates the monitoring of IBP/CUA holders on a regular basis for compliance with conditions in permits. All Special Use Permits originate through this position and are coordinated with the appropriate park division.

The Revenue and Fee Business Coordinator also manages the commercial filming permit program by reviewing proposals, meeting with applicants, selecting locations, and coordinating monitoring of all activities. All requests for commercial still-photography and filming are coordinated through this position.

Concessioners

The current concessioner at Lassen Volcanic National Park is California Guest Services, Inc. They have held a concession contract at the park since October 1982. An extension to their contract was granted on November 8, 2002 and it will expire on October 31, 2005. The contract was executed under the old law and the concessioner does not have a preferential right of renewal. The terms of the contract authorize the concessioner to provide food, lodging, swimming pool (fed by hot springs) and saddle horse services at Drakesbad Guest Ranch. Guided fly fishing services have also been approved on a trial basis. Summer fast food and merchandising services are authorized at the Southwest Visitor Services Facility. Groceries, camper supplies, limited souvenirs, snack bar, and a gasoline station are authorized at Manzanita Lake Camper Services Store. The concessioner also has the preferential right to provide cross-country ski rental in the Manzanita Lake area. The government owns all the facilities assigned to the concessioner including the Manzanita Lake Camper Services Store, the Southwest Visitor Services Facility, and all the buildings at Drakesbad Guest Ranch. There are no concessioner owned facilities in the park. Limited concession owned RV trailer employee housing is allowed at Drakesbad.

Incidental Business Permits/Commercial Use Authorizations

When the regulations to implement the NPS Concessions Management Act are approved, the park will issue Commercial Use Authorizations (CUA) for these types of activities and services. Until then the park will issue CUAs under the interim guidelines.

The number of IBPs issued by the park has remained relatively constant over the past few years. There were 15 IBPs issued in 2004 for activities that were determined to be appropriate commercial uses by park management. 11 permits were issued for guide services including mountaineering, ski tours, hiking, camping, and recreational activities. Some of these are authorized for day use and others for overnight use. 3 permits were issued for bus tours in the park. One operator is authorized for painting tours.

Commercial use can be limited for resource protection reasons. Limitations are a function of the capacity of the resource to accommodate use. In some cases the Superintendent is authorized to suspend issuing permits completely. Under normal circumstances, stipulations are attached to permits to ensure compliance with specific park rules and regulations, protect resources from over or inappropriate use, and to enhance the experience for clients and general visitors.

The NPS is required to recover all costs associated with CUAs. The park fee for a permit is \$100. This includes the cost of issuing the permit and monitoring compliance with the conditions in the permit. The Superintendent has the prerogative to waive the fee if appropriate.

Cooperating Association

Lassen Volcanic National Park has an agreement with the Lassen Loomis Museum Association to sell interpretive materials at the Loomis Museum (which is located in the Manzanita Lake developed area) and at the headquarters information office. The cooperating association has pamphlets and brochures available for a small fee at major trailheads. A small sales outlet for educational and interpretive materials only is provided at the Warner Valley, Juniper Lake, and Butte Lake ranger stations.

Friends Group

Lassen Volcanic National Park has a friends group, the Lassen Park Foundation, which raises money to assist the park. A signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlines the policies, procedures, and terms under which fundraising efforts will be carried out. 16 USC, Section 6 authorizes the park to accept donations of funds for the purposes encompassed by this MOA. The purpose of the Foundation's fundraising is to support mutually agreed upon park projects related to facilities, programs, research, and other activities related to the park mission and goals.

Special Use Permits

Ten Special Use Permits were issued in 2004. The most common requests are for use of the ball field in the Mineral Headquarters area. Special Use Permits are issued annually for the Day in the Park fundraiser event, the Ancestral Run, Diving and Research at Lake Helen by NASA and weddings at various locations.

Commercial Filming

The commercial filming program at Lassen Volcanic National Park is managed as a special park use. Those wishing to do commercial filming in the park are required to contact the Revenue and Fee Business Coordinator and discuss their plans. Those wishing to film are required to reimburse the park for all costs related to meeting with film permit applicants, location scouting, development of permit stipulations, and on-site monitoring of film projects. For each film project a unique set of conditions are developed and enforced. In the past 3 years there have been 5 requests for a filming permit in the park and 4 actual filming projects. Two were in the Warner Valley and two were parkwide.

PARK MISSION AND MISSION GOALS

The Lassen Volcanic NP mission statement is based on the park's enabling legislation. It is stated in the General Management Plan (NPS 2003) and the Strategic Management Plan (NPS 2003b). The Strategic Plan was required of all federal government agencies by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA).

PARK MISSION STATEMENT

"...to conserve, preserve, and protect Lassen Volcanic National Park and its geological, biological, and cultural resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of present and future generations."

The Lassen Volcanic National Park *mission goals* are a set of statements that describe the desired resource conditions and visitor experiences that, taken together, fully achieve the park's purpose, maintain its significance, and meet its mandates.

- Natural, cultural, and wilderness resources and associated values are protected, restored, and maintained in good condition and managed within their broader ecosystem and cultural context.
- The park contributes to knowledge about cultural and natural resources and associated values; management decisions about resources and visitor use are based on adequate scholarly and scientific information.
- Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.
- Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of parks and their resources for this and future generations.
- The park uses current and sustainable management practices, systems, and technologies to accomplish its mission.
- The park increases its managerial capabilities through initiatives and support from other agencies, organizations, and individuals.
- Lassen Volcanic National Park continues to provide the wilderness/rural experience with opportunity for adventure, solitude, enjoyment of pristine environment, etc.

EXISTING PLANNING DIRECTION

This Commercial Services Plan is an implementation plan. It receives its direction from higher level planning efforts such as the General Management Plan (GMP) and Strategic Plan. The GMP establishes the overall guiding management philosophy for the park. It is written conceptually to allow flexibility in

implementation although specific actions can be proposed. All implementation plans must comply with the basic management philosophies established in the GMP and work towards achieving park mission goals.

The GMP for Lassen Volcanic National Park established management zone prescriptions for the park that describe the desired resource conditions, visitor experience, and management strategies for particular areas. Among other things, appropriate visitor use levels are established which relate to resource carrying capacities. Commercial use will be allocated within these conceptual limits until the VERP process identifies more specific numbers. The GMP defines the management zones in the following manner:

In the *wilderness zone* resources are intended to be pristine and natural processes prevail. Visitor opportunities for independence, solitude, and application of outdoor skills are high and the probability of encountering other visitors is low. To achieve this high level of resource and experience preservation limitation of visitor use is appropriate.

In the *winter backcountry zone* natural processes will not be impeded. Wilderness-like conditions will be experienced with moderate to high opportunities for challenge, adventure, and risk. There is a low probability of encountering other visitors. To achieve these conditions limitation of visitor use is appropriate.

In the *scenic drive zone (summer)* natural systems are not significantly affected. Sensitive resources and the historic Route 1 landscape are protected from inappropriate visitor use and development. Visitor attractions are convenient and accessible and the probability of encountering other visitors is high. Facilities are rustic and designed to harmonize with the natural environment. To achieve these conditions the zone is intensively managed with only the development necessary to provide a quality visitor experience and frequent ranger patrols.

In the *remote unit access road zone (summer)* significant natural processes and sensitive habitat are not affected. A driving experience in a largely undisturbed natural environment with minimal facilities is provided and encounters with other visitors are highly probable. To achieve these conditions development is held to the minimum necessary and regular ranger patrols occur.

In the *summer developed zone* sensitive resources are not affected. All visitor service facilities, including concession facilities, are located in this zone. They are convenient, accessible, and comply with parkwide architectural standards by blending with the natural environment through rustic design. The visitor experience is structured and the chances for adventure are minimal. To achieve these conditions the zone is intensively managed.

The *winter developed zone* includes areas with major visitor facilities that are accessible and usable in the winter months. Visitor service facilities, concessions facilities, and ranger stations are included in the developed zone. The intent is to provide the information and conveniences necessary to allow visitors to enjoy and learn about the park's winter environment.

The *administration and inholder zones* are identified in the GMP but are not pertinent to this planning effort.

The vision in the GMP is for the park to serve as a model for ecosystem management and cultural resource protection for the benefit of present and future generations. A diversity of visitors will be provided year-round opportunities for education and enjoyment. Many of the visitor use facilities, including concessioner facilities, not now available or fully functional in the colder months will be

winterized to facilitate year-round operations. The following are GMP goals that could have an effect on commercial services.

In the wilderness zone (as defined in the GMP), visitor education to instill a wilderness ethic will be the primary management strategy to protect resources. Establishing carrying capacities or group size limits will not be implemented, at least as an initial management tool. The Warner Valley Road in the remote unit access road zone will be improved for safety and accessibility. Improvements will be made to the main park road in the scenic drive zone at pullouts and interpretive areas to reduce impacts and enhance visitor experience. Interpretation will be improved with better signing and ranger-led programs. Non-personal services will include audiotape tours, milepost-keyed road guides, wayside exhibits, bulletin boards, and organized information for bus tour use. Several improvements will be made in the developed zone to support an enhanced interpretive program and visitor use. The southwest entrance facility will be constructed to provide better interpretive and commercial services on a year-round basis. The picnic area at Kings Creek will be expanded to provide bus parking and better accommodate group use. In the winter, the northwest entrance road will be plowed to the camper store to allow the concessioner to offer limited food service and rental of skis and snowshoes. The southwest entrance road will be plowed to the new facility to allow a similar concession operation.

PLANNING ISSUES

Public scoping meetings for the GMP were held in several cities around the park in the fall of 1998. The comments received were published in a GMP Newsletter #2 in October 1998. It is important to note that based on the comments received, there was no real consensus that dramatic changes were warranted at Lassen, even in the commercial service area. The following is a summary of the scoping comments received for the GMP:

Interpretation and Education:

- Enhance interpretive facilities at southwest entrance
- More naturalist programs at Drakesbad area of park
- More ranger programs, especially in evenings, at south end of park – need better balance between north and south ends
- Provide a visitor interpretation center at the southwest entrance
- Provide special ranger tours for special interest groups

Natural Resource Management:

- Carrying capacity on trails
- Determine carrying capacity thresholds
- Encourage “leave no trace”, especially backcountry camping – educate and train for this
- Manage backcountry use to reduce impacts
- Manage park based on carrying capacity
- Reinforce denial for utility easements and transmitters on peaks
- Review operation of Drakesbad

Partnerships and Cooperation:

- Partner/reach out with other neighboring facilities – private camping
- Work with local businesses to educate/provide information about the park

Regional Economic Aspects:

- Lassen is a jewel that should be shared to utilize economic potential
- Recognize economic asset to local communities

Visitor Access:

- Accommodate bicycles on roads at Manzanita Lake
- Consider traffic management; busses, people
- More cross-country ski tracks
- Groom park road in winter for cross-country skiing
- Improve circulation in Manzanita Lake area, especially at store
- Include access to store in winter snow clearing plan for Manzanita Lake area
- Locate facilities outside of park
- Pave road to Warner Valley and Drakesbad
- Provide access/roads to Butte and Summit Lakes – think about future visitor services and more accommodations

Visitor Experience:

- Accommodate dogs – there needs to be places for dogs
- Address potential increased visitation, i.e. manage crowds
- Backpacking is an area to look for visitor distribution
- Consider pacing (size of groups) on Lassen Peak and Bumpass Hell trails to avoid congestion
- Consider visitor limits; carrying capacity defined
- Develop no new permanent structures
- Keep the park as it is and as natural as possible
- Look at distribution pattern of people visiting the park, related to carrying capacity
- Manzanita Lake Camper Store area congestion; safety concerns and adequate maneuverability space for RVs
- Reestablish ski lift at the southwest entrance
- Separate tent and RV campers
- Visitors comment to local business owners an appreciation for the lack of crowding in Lassen

Visitor Service:

- Add bike trails at Manzanita Lake
- Add turnouts on main park road with picnic tables
- Address visitor facilities especially outside the park
- Adjust fee schedule in winter when facilities are minimal
- Against more concessions; current ones okay
- All restrooms should be accessible
- Balance facilities in park with campgrounds that are external to park
- Caution: “Not all parks need to be Yosemite Valley” – watch for over development
- Consider alternative uses for Drakesbad
- Consider the role of concessions in the park – length of contract and disposition of employees
- Develop backcountry cabin(s) for winter/spring use
- Encourage visitation; provide winter programs
- Hook-ups for RVs
- Minimize concession operations
- More services for south side of park
- Need for more roving interps – educate all staff to answer questions

- Need for overnight lodging facilities in the park
- Need handicap accessibility
- Promote cross-country skiing
- Provide improved visitor center/concession building at southwest entrance for year-round use
- Provide more opportunities and activities along the road
- Provide RV camp at southwest entrance
- Provide winter camp opportunities at Manzanita Lake
- Re-institute ice skating at Reflection Lake
- Review concession operation for park (Too much? Too little? In the right places?)
- Review need for concessions in winter at south entrance
- RV facility accommodation
- Ski area added back or good family-oriented winter activities provided
- Support construction of Pavilion at northwest entrance
- Support for more visitor services/activities
- Support information center and kiosk structure
- Visitors want a kennels at trailheads
- Winter use facilities (relationship to fee collection \$)

The above scoping comments were addressed in the GMP, but also served as valuable input for the Commercial Services Plan.

Public scoping meetings specific to the Commercial Services Plan were held in 2002 in Chico (August 19), Red Bluff (August 21), Redding (August 20), and Chester (August 22). They were an open house format with information displayed to generate discussion with park and planning team staff. A total of 32 people participated in the meetings and 6 individuals mailed comment letters to the park. Many ideas and suggestions were provided that are applicable to the purpose of this plan. Several new activities and services were suggested including:

- Commercial pack tours
- A hiker shuttle
- Services to remote locations in the park
- Eco-tours and seminars
- Electronic interpretive services (audio tour)
- Guide and instructional services in summer and winter
- Equipment rental in summer and winter

Other Comments included:

- Support for the Southwest Visitor Services Facility and improved services
- Enhanced winter activities and services
- Activities to extend the shoulder seasons
- More retail sales
- Addressing deferred maintenance needs for commercial services and facilities
- Changes to services and facilities to accommodate evolving visitor characteristics such as large RVs in campgrounds, tour busses, and facilities for large groups
- Relationship to scenic byway system
- Support for local communities providing food and lodging facilities outside the park.

In addition to the above comments from the public, the park and concession staff met in the fall of 1999 to discuss issues specific to commercial services at Lassen. The following summarize the ideas identified in that meeting:

- Plan should include input from comment cards received by concessioner
- Increased accommodations at Drakesbad and Manzanita Lake
- Better retail facilities
- Tour bus accommodations – step on guides and food service
- Provide full services at Manzanita Lake similar to historic services (lodging and restaurant)
- Provide a range of lodging/overnight experiences – have camping and Drakesbad but nothing in between
- Explore options to expand service in park– mobile service or something equivalent at Summit Lake, Butte Lake, Peak parking lot, and others
- Expand food service and facility at Manzanita Lake – walk-up and sit down (inside and out) service
- Serve more visitor at one time at new southwest entrance facility – inside/outside service, cafeteria style, catering opportunities for bus groups, flexibility in style of service for changing visitor pattern
- Drakesbad – bath house remodel and expansion of services; esthetic improvements in pool area; alternative energy options; guided fly fishing services; and interpretive programs
- Lassen Loomis Museum Association – expanded retail space; services in remote areas of park; more interpretive services (programs, step-on guides, audio tours, etc.)

All of the above comments were considered in the formulation of alternative ways to approach commercial service management at Lassen. Some ideas and suggestions were more appropriate than others. All the ideas that were addressed in the plan were required to be consistent with the GMP and aid in achieving the park’s mission and goals.

DESIRED FUTURE COMMERCIAL SERVICES CONDITIONS

After consideration of legal direction and constraints, the mission and goals of Lassen Volcanic National Park, the approved planning direction for the park, and issues affecting commercial services in the park, the following desired future conditions or goals specific to commercial services were developed. They are the benchmark for all proposals in this plan. All alternatives and proposals had to strive to attain the conditions described.

- The types of commercial activities sustain thematic, educational, and environmental values
- The range of commercial goods and services offered allows visitors to safely enjoy and be satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of experiences available
- The park is partnering with the local communities to encourage that complimentary and beneficial services are available to park visitors
- Commercial services are comprehensively managed to achieve the mission and goals of the park
- There is a level of commercial activity that supports the range of experiences from rustic to wilderness that the park is trying to promote

- A “light on the land”, unobtrusive, commercial experience is provided
- Lassen is a “traditional” park in the spirit of early national parks
- Commercial activities support and compliment the values of the park.

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

The following alternatives describe two different management strategies that were considered to achieve desired future conditions for commercial services at Lassen Volcanic National Park. These alternatives are consistent with applicable laws, the purpose of the park, the commercial services goals for the park, and the direction established in the current GMP approved February 2002 with final printing occurring in June 2003.

Two alternatives were considered; No Action and the Proposed Action. The No Action alternative proposes to maintain all existing activities, services, and facilities with a management strategy similar to the existing strategy. It is a viable alternative and presented as a baseline from which to compare the proposal. The Proposed Action also maintains all activities, services, and facilities in the park. It also protects resources to a greater extent, enhances visitor experience, and provides the detailed actions necessary to implement the commercial services direction established in the GMP. Both alternatives are presented by geographical location in the park.

It should be noted that the NPS has issued interim guidelines to replace Incidental Business Permits with Commercial Use Authorizations (see earlier discussion). For the sake of long-term clarity, these permits will be referred to as CUAs in this document. It should also be noted that the proposal of an action in this plan does not necessarily guarantee that it will happen. Implementation is always subject to resource and funding availability.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Concept – In this alternative the NPS would continue the existing commercial services management strategy at Lassen Volcanic National Park. That strategy is to evaluate proposals from commercial operators or park staff on a case by case basis and make appropriate decisions. This alternative does not propose to freeze conditions at a point in time or maintain the status quo. Actions that are already planned or consistent with the existing strategy would be implemented.

Southwest Visitor Services Facility – The Chalet would be replaced with a new, larger, energy efficient, accessible, and sustainable facility. The commercial elements of the building would include food and beverage service and gift/merchandise sales. The food service would be a deli style/cook to order format with indoor (40%) and outdoor (60%) seating. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner would be available. There would be no vending machines. It would be a year round operation with seasonally adjusted hours. In the winter the level of service and amount of offerings would be reduced in accordance with the level of visitation and visitor needs. Beer and wine sales would be authorized. The concessioner would be authorized to accommodate large groups such as tour bus groups for meals but not at the expense of use

by general visitors. Merchandise sold would be thematic (specifically related to the natural and cultural resources found at Lassen Volcanic National Park) and would also include convenience and support items. In the summer, the concessioner would be authorized to rent bear proof canisters for backpacking in the park. In the winter, the concessioner would be authorized to rent snowshoes and cross country skis and provide instructional services. (Note: The park would continue to provide interpretive snowshoe programs to visitors and school groups.)

The Lassen Loomis Museum Association (LLMA) would have space in the new facility for the sale of educational and interpretive materials. No convenience items would be authorized for sale by the association at this location to avoid competition with the concession operation. The association would also be authorized to produce and rent interpretive audio tour tapes for visitor use in the park. This activity would be coordinated with the association outlet in the Loomis Museum at Manzanita Lake. In addition, the association would be authorized to conduct educational seminars utilizing the new Southwest Visitor Services Facility or the Loomis Museum. These seminars would be park specific guided experiences.

Manzanita Lake – The store would continue to offer food and beverage, gift shop, and merchandise sales and services. The food service would be the same format and style as at the Southwest Visitor Services Facility. Outdoor seating is already authorized. There would be no vending machines. Beer and wine sales would be authorized. Gift and merchandise sales would have the same requirements for thematic appropriateness and cost range as described for the Southwest Visitor Services Facility store. The concessioner would also be authorized to rent the same equipment as at the southwest facility. The Manzanita Lake facility also serves as a camper store for the NPS campground. It would be authorized to provide a range of camper supplies and support merchandise such as groceries and ice. Support services would also be authorized such as the gas station, showers, and laundry facilities. In accordance with the GMP, no commercial overnight lodging would be available in the park at Manzanita Lake.

The LLMA would continue to be authorized to sell educational and interpretive materials at the Loomis Museum facility through a cooperative agreement. This would include production and rental of an interpretive audio tape tour for the park. The agreement would also authorize guided educational seminars specific to park experiences.

Warner Valley – The LLMA would continue to operate a sales outlet from the ranger station through a cooperative agreement.

Drakesbad – Rustic lodging would continue to be authorized by a concession contract at the current level of service. Only the Comprehensive Site Plan required by the GMP could change the level of service. Food service would continue to be sit-down dining with a fixed menu “American Plan” program that also accommodates common diets such as vegetarian. The general public would be allowed to use the dining room; however, advance reservations would be required. Merchandise sold would include convenience and gift items. In the summer the concessioner would be authorized to rent bear proof canisters for backpacking in the park. Horseback rides would continue to be authorized as well as the boarding of private party horses. Operation of the swimming pool and bath house would be authorized in the concession contract. The NPS would continue to allow the concessioner to operate services such as massage therapy and fly fishing instruction as long as they are appropriate and continue to serve visitor needs. The level of existing employee housing at Drakesbad would be evaluated in the Warner Valley Comprehensive Site Plan and adjusted accordingly. Existing trailers used for housing would be removed to protect the cultural landscape once alternative housing is provided.

Butte Lake and Juniper Lake – The LLMA would continue to sell educational and interpretive items from the ranger stations under a cooperative agreement.

Parkwide – The concession contracts referred to above at Southwest Visitor Services Facility, Manzanita Lake, and Drakesbad would continue to be combined into a single contract with one concessioner. Any new contract would address issues related to the adequacy of all facilities such as handicapped accessibility, storage issues, and kitchen facilities. Some of the financial responsibility of resolving these issues would fall on the NPS and some on the concessioner. The contract would also address deferred maintenance on government owned facilities and define the financial responsibility of the concessioner. The concessioner would follow all compliance requirements on all projects. Finally, the contract would address sustainability including the use of environmentally friendly products and conservation of resources. There would be incentives and responsibilities in the contract for sustainable practices in the concessioner’s operation. A mobile food service for the park road would be authorized but not required.

CUAs for services such as guiding, instruction, and interpretation would continue to be authorized by permit. They would continue to be evaluated and approved on a case-by-case basis. Commercial filming would continue to be authorized by permits pursuant to NPS policies and regulations. Likewise, special use permits for such activities as weddings, ball field activities, and other special activities would continue to be authorized pursuant to policies and regulations. All activities and services would be subject to compliance review.

The NPS would continue its relationship with the LLMA through a cooperative agreement. All concessioners and CUA permit holders would be required to support the interpretive program of Lassen Volcanic National Park. Interpretive material would be provided to commercial operators by the park interpretive staff. Concessioners and CUA permit holders would not be required to identify their relationship with the NPS at their facilities. Concessioners would be required to identify their relationship with the NPS in their publications.

There would be no new overnight lodging in the park, per the GMP. However, the NPS would encourage and work with private entities outside the park to provide the service if the need were identified.

The commercial services program in the park would continue to be managed by one or two individuals as collateral duties.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

Concept – In this alternative the NPS would take actions that would achieve the desired future conditions identified in this plan. The intent would be to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the commercial services management program. This alternative would also authorize some new services and make changes to existing operations to improve visitor experience and convenience.

Southwest Visitor Services Facility – This alternative would provide the same services and operations at the same level as described in Alternative 1. This is a new facility and the actions taken to achieve the goals of improved management and visitor experience would be applicable to both alternatives.

Manzanita Lake -- This alternative would provide the same services and operations at the same levels as described in Alternative 1. In addition, indoor seating would be authorized. Fishing instruction would also be authorized in the summer.

The LLMA would be authorized to provide the same services as in Alternative 1.

Warner Valley – The LLMA would continue to operate a sales outlet from the ranger station, through a cooperative agreement as in Alternative 1. In addition, they would also be authorized to conduct educational seminars specific to park experiences and rent audio tape tours. Limited convenience item sales would also be authorized at the Ranger Station by a concession contract with LLMA.

Drakesbad – The commercial operation would be essentially the same as described in Alternative 1 with rustic lodging, American Plan food service, merchandise and gift sales, horseback riding, fly fishing instruction, and swimming pool, bath house, and massage therapy authorized.

While this alternative proposes the same basic commercial operation at Drakesbad it does include some operational changes from Alternative 1. The contract Operating Plan would address booking and reservation policies to ensure all visitors have an equal opportunity to garner accommodations. The swimming pool and bath house would be open to the general public with a user fee authorized subject to capacity and health constraints. Trails would be designated for commercial horseback riding. Proportionate to the amount of use the concessioner would be fiscally responsible for the maintenance of those trails to established standards. Group size and cumulative horse use would be subject to carrying capacity limits. Visitor experience and resource protection studies would be conducted to determine the appropriate level of use and would be published in the Lassen Volcanic National Park Wilderness Plan. The number of horses allowed in the Drakesbad corral would reflect these limitations. Boarding of private party horses would not be authorized.

Butte and Juniper Lakes -- The LLMA would continue to be authorized to sell educational and interpretive items from the ranger stations under a cooperative agreement as in Alternative 1. In addition, the sale of convenience items by the association at the Ranger Station would also be authorized by a concession contract with LLMA.

Parkwide – As in Alternative 1, the concession contracts referred to above at Southwest Visitor Services Facility, Manzanita Lake, and Drakesbad would continue to be combined into a single contract with one concessioner. In Alternative 2, the concession contract would also authorize the concessioner to cater food for NPS approved special activities and events such as fund raisers and appreciation days. The concession contract would also require gift sales which are thematically appropriate with the mission of the NPS and the park. Gift and merchandise sales would require a range of core items required and a cost range of other items authorized.

As in Alternative 1, any new contract would include provisions to address facility inadequacies, deferred maintenance, and sustainability.

Permitting for CUAs would also be the same as in Alternative 1 except the NPS would develop an evaluation process for CUAs at Lassen Volcanic National Park. Evaluation criteria would be developed and published resulting in a list of approved and non-approved activities. The evaluation form, criteria, and approved/non-approved activities list that would be used is in Appendix A.

Commercial filming would continue to be authorized by permits pursuant to NPS policies and regulations as in Alternative 1. Likewise, special use permits for such activities as weddings, ball field activities, and other special activities would continue to be authorized pursuant to policies and regulations.

As in Alternative 1, the NPS would continue its relationship with the LLMA through a cooperative

agreement. The agreement currently authorizes sale of educational and interpretive material, per NPS policy. In order to improve visitor experience and convenience Alternative 2 would also authorize the sale of limited convenience items such as film, water, maps, and insect repellent at some of their more remote outlets where a major concession operation is not practical. The NPS would enter into a concession contract with LLMA to authorize the sale of these convenience items.

All concessioners and CUA permit holders would be required to support the interpretive program of Lassen Volcanic National Park as in Alternative 1. However, in this alternative the park interpretive division would develop a certification process that would include provision of interpretive materials and mandatory attendance at interpretive training. All printed, audio, and video materials used by commercial operators would be reviewed and approved by the NPS. Park staff would also audit commercial operator activities to ensure accurate and appropriate interpretive information was being given to visitors.

Commercial operators are partners with the NPS to provide goods and services to visitors. To emphasize this partnership, in Alternative 2 all commercial facilities inside the park would be identified with the NPS arrowhead symbol at a minimum. In addition, all printed, audio, and video material used by commercial operators would be required to be pre-approved by the Superintendent and state that the business is authorized by the NPS. This would be a requirement in all concession contracts and CUA permits.

As in Alternative 1, there would be no new overnight lodging in the park, per the GMP; however, the NPS would encourage and work with private entities outside the park to provide the service if the need were identified.

The commercial services program in the park would be managed by one dedicated concessions specialist, rather than as a collateral duty under the No Action alternative. This would be a new position in the park and would be under direct supervision of the Chief of Administration. That individual would manage the concession contract conducting associated compliance, reviews, and evaluations. That position would also manage the Commercial Use Authorization programs reviewing proposals/requests, issuing permits, coordinating needed NPS support, and monitoring activities. Finally, the concessions specialist would manage commercial activities of LLMA, commercial filming, and special use permits.

Impairment Summary Statement

The NPS must consider the impacts of each alternative to determine if the described action would lead to an impairment of resources per the Organic Act and General Authorities Act. If there would be impairment the action may not be approved. An impairment is (the result of) an action that would diminish in strength, value, quality and/or quantity the resources for which the park is responsible. In the context of this document, impairment would be a management action that would harm the integrity of park resources or values, including opportunities that would otherwise be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. Not all impacts constitute impairment. Severity, duration, and timing of the impact help determine whether the integrity of a park resource or value would be irreparably compromised.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzes the impacts of two alternatives (including the no-action alternative) on the environment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (Title 40 Code of Federal Regulation Part 1500 *et sequentia*), NPS policies, and other relevant laws and regulations.

Impact Topics Analyzed in this Document. Impacts of the alternatives on the following topics are presented in this EA: (1) Soils and (2) Visitor Experience.

Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Analysis. The topics listed below either would not be affected or would be affected negligibly by the alternatives evaluated in this EA. Therefore, these topics have been dismissed from further consideration or analysis. Negligible effects are effects that are localized and immeasurable or at the lowest levels of detection.

Prime and Unique Farmlands. None of the alternatives evaluated in this EA would affect prime or unique farmlands, as potentially affected areas are located on NPS property that does not support agriculture.

Air Quality. The Clean Air Act of 1963, as amended, and associated NPS policies require the NPS to protect air quality in parks. Any impacts on air quality would be negligible in a local and regional context.

Floodplains. No projects are proposed for development within floodplains.

Vegetation

General. The impacts to vegetation from the Southwest Visitor Services Facility have already been assessed in a separate Environmental Assessment (NPS 2004), for which there was an approved Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). No other impacts would occur to vegetation as a result of either of the alternatives.

Special Status Species. The impacts to special status species were assessed in the 2004 Environmental Assessment for the Southwest Visitor Services Facility. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the Park's finding of "not likely to adversely effect" for these species. No other concession services proposed in this Environmental Assessment would have any impact on special status species.

Wetlands. Wetland communities, including seeps and springs, are found throughout the Park. Wetlands and wetland vegetation would not be impacted in either of the two alternatives evaluated in this EA.

Wildlife. Approximately 300 species of terrestrial and aquatic vertebrates have been recorded in the park, including 64 mammals, 208 birds, 10 fish, and 18 amphibians and reptiles. No wildlife species would be impacted in either of the two alternatives evaluated in this EA.

Geologic/Geothermal Resources. Within the park is a diverse array of volcanic resources including composite volcanoes, shield volcanoes, plug dome volcanoes, tephra cones, lava flows, and active geothermal areas. There would be no impacts to thermal features in either alternative evaluated in this EA.

Wilderness. Congress designated 78,982 acres of Lassen Volcanic National Park as wilderness in October, 1972. The NPS wilderness management policies are based on provisions of the 1916 NPS Organic Act, the 1964 Wilderness Act, and legislation establishing individual units of the national park system. The public purpose of wilderness in national parks includes the preservation of wilderness character and wilderness resources in an unimpaired condition, as well as for the purposes of recreational, aesthetic, scientific, education, conservation, and historical use. Developed areas are excluded from wilderness and the actions

evaluated in this EA would not affect wilderness character or values.

Historic Structures. There are no changes proposed under either alternative to any historic structures and thus there would be no impacts.

Archeological Resources. There are no actions proposed under either alternative that would involve ground disturbance and thus there would be no impacts.

Cultural Landscapes. Lassen Volcanic National Park has several Cultural Landscapes including ,but not limited to, the Main Park Road and the Drakesbad Guest Ranch. The actions evaluated in this EA would not adversely affect cultural landscapes.

Ethnographic Resources. The Lassen area has been described as a meeting point, or “cultural no man’s land”, for at least four native groups. Use of the area by the Atsugewi, Yana, Yahi, and northern Maidu groups brought a mix of cultural elements characteristic of central and northeastern California with Great Basin-Plateau elements (Treganza 1963:5).

For groups moving through the area, Lassen Peak provided seasonal resources on its slopes and in the open valleys and lakes that border it. Some of the most important resources include mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus hemionus*), wild sunflower (*Wyethia mollis*), and various tubers. Journey (1970:30) draws a connection between sites where hopper mortars and pestles have been found and the reliance on wild sunflower as a staple in the late prehistoric and protohistoric diet.

Organized groups of Maidu and Atsugewi are currently located to the southeast and north of the Park. There are no organized groups of Yana or Yahi. Although there is a fair amount of written ethnographic data for these American Indian groups, little information about the groups’ contemporary use of the Park resources has been obtained. The Park is in the early stages of acquiring and documenting traditional and current use information from the local American Indian communities.

The actions evaluated in this EA would not adversely affect ethnographic resources.

Environmental Justice. The actions evaluated in this EA would not adversely affect socially or economically disadvantaged populations.

Socio-economics. The local and regional economy and most businesses in the communities surrounding the park are based on logging and wood products manufacturing, cattle ranching, agriculture, professional services, tourist sales and services, and educational research. The socio-economic impacts of the future Southwest Visitor Services Facility were assessed in a separate Environmental Assessment. The other actions evaluated in this EA would have negligible effects on socio-economics.

Health and Safety. Visitor and employee health and safety would in no way be impacted by either of the alternatives evaluated in this EA.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

In accordance with Director’s Order-12, *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making*, the NPS is required to identify the “environmentally preferred alternative” in all environmental documents. The environmentally preferred alternative is determined by applying the criteria suggested in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, which is guided by the

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The CEQ (46 FR 18026 - 46 FR 18038) provides direction that “[t]he environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in NEPA’s Section 101”, which considers

- fulfilling the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
- assuring for all generations safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
- attaining the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
- preserving important historic, cultural and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintaining, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
- achieving a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life’s amenities; and
- enhancing the quality of renewable resources and approaching the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources (NEPA Section 101(b)).

Generally, these criteria mean the environmentally preferable alternative is the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment and that best protects, preserves, and enhances historic, cultural, and natural resources (46 FR 18026 – 46 FR 18038).

As described in this Environmental Assessment, the proposed action is also the environmentally preferred alternative. After review of potential resource and visitor impacts, the proposed action achieves the greatest balance between providing the necessary commercial services and protecting the park’s resources.

Alternatives Considered and Rejected

The NPS considered options to the American plan dining service at Drakesbad such as broader menu choices, use by the general public without reservations, and not requiring participation by lodge guests who would then pay a reduced lodging rate. These options were rejected due primarily to facility constraints and safety issues. To have broader menu choices and be open to the general public without reservations, kitchen and storage facilities would have to be substantially expanded. It would also require additional staffing with associated issues such as staff housing. Allowing non-participation in the American plan by lodge guests would require renovating some lodge units with kitchens and/or allowing the use of cook stoves in lodge units with associated safety issues. These types of changes would substantially change the character of the facility/operation and the visitor experience. It is not within the scope of an implementation plan, such as this Commercial Services Plan, to make those types of management decisions. They are General Management Plan or Comprehensive Site Plan issues. If a future Warner Valley Comprehensive Site Plan proposes changes, this plan would be amended to implement those changes.

Table 1 - SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

LOCATION	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2
Concept	Continue existing appropriate case by case commercial services management strategy	Implement the commercial services desired future conditions established in this plan enhancing the visitor experience and commercial services program effectiveness and efficiency
Southwest Visitor Services Facility (SWVSF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Replace Chalet -Food and beverage service: deli/cook to order format with indoor (40%) and outdoor (60%) seating; three meals per day in summer; year round operation with seasonal hours; beer and wine; no vending machines -Rental of bear canisters (summer) and skis/snowshoes (winter) -Winter instructional services authorized -LLMA sales outlet for educational and interpretive materials; interpretive audio tape tour production and rental; guided educational seminars 	Same as Alternative 1
Manzanita Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Camper store continue food, beverage, beer and wine, gifts, merchandise, gasoline, and camper services -Special food services authorized but not required -No overnight lodging -LLMA operate in museum with educational and interpretive sales through cooperative agreement 	Same as Alternative 1 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Indoor seating at camper store -Fishing instruction
Warner Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -LLMA sales outlet for educational and interpretive materials at Ranger Station -Comp Site Plan evaluate new location 	Same as Alternative 1 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sale of convenience items by LLMA at Ranger Station authorized by concession contract - Educational seminars could be conducted and Audio Tours could be rented by LLMA
Drakesbad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rustic lodging, food, beverage, and merchandise sales continue at current levels -American plan food service continue for guests and by reservation for others -Operate pool and spa facilities; 	Same as Alternative 1 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reservation policy changes -Pool open to public for fee -Horseback riding limited by capacities and designated trails -Concessioner contribute financially to trail maintenance

	<p>massage therapy authorized</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Horseback riding and private horse boarding authorized -Instructional fishing services authorized 	-No private horse boarding
Butte and Juniper Lakes	-LLMA sales outlet for educational and interpretive materials at Ranger Stations	Same as Alternative 1 plus: -Sale of convenience items by LLMA at Ranger Stations authorized by concession contract
Parkwide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Southwest Visitor Services Facility, Manzanita Lake, and Drakesbad continue combined into a single contract with one concessioner; any new contract would address facility adequacy issues, deferred maintenance, and financial responsibility; concessioner follow all compliance requirements; contract would address sustainability and environmental factors -Mobile food service authorized -CUAs, commercial filming, and special use permits continue to be authorized by permit; continue case-by-case analysis and approval; subject to compliance review - Continue relationship with LLMA through a cooperative agreement - All concessioners and CUA permit holders required to support interpretive program; interpretive materials supplied - Concessioners and CUA permit holders not required to identify relationship with NPS at facilities -Concessioners required to identify relationship with NPS in publications - No new overnight lodging in the park; NPS would encourage private entities outside park to provide - Commercial services program would continue to be managed by one or two individuals as collateral duties 	<p>Same as Alternative 1 plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Concession contract also would authorize catering food for NPS approved special activities and events; also would require thematically appropriate gift sales and range of core items with cost range of other items authorized - Concession contract with LLMA for sale of convenience items at Ranger Stations -CUAs authorized per published evaluation process with approved/non-approved lists (Appendix A) -Interpretive certification required of all commercial operators; media reviewed and activities audited -NPS identity required on all facilities in park and on all media used by commercial operators -Commercial services program managed by new dedicated concessions specialist position

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Table 2 - SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES BY ACCOMPLISHMENT OF GOALS

GOAL	ALTERNATIVE 1	ALTERNATIVE 2
Park has staff, funding, and tools to allow efficient and effective management of program	Minimally met – limited staffing and tools	Fully met – new staff position and evaluation tools
All visitors are aware of being in a National Park and know the mission of park	Minimally met – only some of the commercial facilities and literature identifies authorization by NPS	Fully met – all commercial providers required to identify themselves as authorized by NPS in literature and on facilities
Park is able to manage impact of all authorized and unauthorized activity	Minimally met – conditions in permits on case-by-case basis; staff monitors activity as collateral duty	Fully met – evaluation process ensures consistent conditions in all permits; staff able to monitor activity
All commercial providers are aware of and participate in mission of park	Minimally met – NPS interpretive and mission materials available to commercial operators on voluntary basis	Fully met – commercial operator interpretation and mission certification required; interpretive messages audited
All commercial facilities and services are high quality and safe	Met -- collateral duty staff monitors activity	Fully met – Concession specialist able to monitor and evaluate activities
Only appropriate commercial recreational activities compatible with achieving the goals of the park are provided	Met – collateral duty staff evaluate appropriate activities on case-by-case basis	Fully met – Concession specialist uses established evaluation process to approve appropriate activities
Continue to work with partners to provide appropriate activities and services that enhance visitor experience inside and outside park	Met – NPS works with commercial operators on a case by case basis to provide new, appropriate services; reacts to development proposals to provide services and facilities outside park	Fully met -- NPS only approves new facilities and services based upon new consistent process; pro-active in encouraging appropriate visitor services and facilities outside park
All commercial activities are sustainable and promote resource protection and enhancement (“no trace”, backcountry use, “green” procurement, etc.)	Met – new concession contracts and permits would include these measures and collateral duty staff would monitor to the extent possible	Fully met – new concession contracts and permits would include these measures and full time staff would monitor compliance closely
The range of commercial goods and services offered allows for visitor satisfaction with availability, accessibility, and diversity	Met – as a range of appropriate activities are proposed they would be approved on case-by-case basis	Fully met – goods and services assessed in a consistent manner; pricing and reservation policy changes considered

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Concept of Impact Analysis

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that environmental documents disclose the environmental impacts of the proposed federal action, reasonable alternatives to that action, and any adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided should the proposed action be implemented. This section analyzes the environmental impacts of two project alternatives on soils, visitor experience, health and safety, and socio-economics. These analyses provide the basis for comparing the effects of the alternatives. NEPA requires consideration of context, intensity and duration of impacts, indirect impacts, cumulative impacts, and measures to mitigate impacts. In addition to determining the environmental consequences of the preferred and other alternatives, NPS *Management Policies* (NPS, 2001) and Director's Order-12, *Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision-making*, require analysis of potential effects to determine if actions would impair park resources.

The fundamental purpose of the National Park System, established by the Organic Act and reaffirmed by the General Authorities Act, as amended, begins with a mandate to conserve park resources and values. NPS managers must always seek ways to avoid or minimize to the greatest degree practicable adverse impacts on park resources and values. However, the laws do give the NPS management discretion to allow impacts to park resources and values when necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purposes of a park, as long as the impact does not constitute impairment of the affected resources and values. Although Congress has given the NPS management discretion to allow certain impacts within parks, that discretion is limited by the statutory requirement that the NPS must leave park resources and values unimpaired, unless a particular law directly and specifically provides otherwise. The prohibited impairment is an impact that, in the professional judgement of the responsible NPS manager, would harm the integrity of park resources or values, including opportunities that otherwise would be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. An impact to any park resource or value may constitute an impairment. However, an impact would more likely constitute an impairment to the extent it affects a resource or value whose conservation is

- necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park;
- key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park; or
- identified as a goal in the Park's General Management Plan or other relevant NPS planning documents.

Definition of Terms

TYPE OF IMPACT

Adverse impacts are those that change the affected environment in a manner tending away from the natural range of variability.

Beneficial impacts are those that change the affected environment toward the natural range of variability.

CONTEXT OF IMPACT

Direct impacts include such impacts as animal and plant mortality, damage to cultural resources, or creation of smoke, that occur at the time and place of the action.

Indirect impacts are those that occur at a different time and/or place than the action. Indirect impacts include changes such as species composition, structure of the vegetation, or range of wildlife. Indirect impacts also include impacts that occur off-site such as erosion-related impacts, or general economic conditions tied to park activities.

Cumulative impacts are those impacts on the environment that result from the incremental (i.e., additive) impact of direct and indirect impacts when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of who undertakes such actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

DURATION OF IMPACT

Duration is a measure of the time period over which the effects of an impact persist. The duration of impacts evaluated in this EA may be one of the following:

Short term impacts are those that can be reversed relatively quickly. Short term impacts typically occur only during implementation and last less than one year; or

Long term impacts are those that are reversed more slowly. Long term impacts last one year or longer.

INTENSITY OF IMPACT

Intensity is a measure of the severity of an impact. The intensity of an impact may be:

negligible, when the impact is localized and not measurable or at the lowest level of detection;

minor, when the impact is localized and slight but detectable;

moderate, when the impact is readily apparent and appreciable; or

major, when the impact is severe and highly noticeable.

Analysis of Impacts

Park Soils

Affected Environment

The soils within Lassen Volcanic National Park are generally rocky, shallow, rapidly drained and strongly acidic. They are almost exclusively volcanic in origin. Depths vary from several feet in limited lower elevation meadows to thin or nonexistent in the higher elevations. Because of their rock porous nature, the soils are rather resistant to erosion. However, soil erosion does occur in conjunction with some heavily used trails.

Soils in the Warner Valley area that support commercial horse rides are of volcanic origin as elsewhere in the park and vary in depth from thin layers in higher elevation areas or on exposed ridges to deeper well formed soils along the valley floor. Drakesbad Meadow is known to have extremely wet conditions supporting histosol and hydric soils due in part to the unique spring-fed region. These wet soils create a potential resource impact issue related to trail construction, maintenance and visitor use. Trails need to be designed and maintained in order to maintain water flow and protect sensitive wetland plant species.

Detailed soil information comes from a few small development projects and is site specific. A comprehensive soil survey has never been completed for the entire park, though efforts are underway to begin a parkwide soil survey by the Natural Resource Conservation Service in 2005.

Impacts on Soils for Alternative 1 (No Action)

The no-action alternative would neither monitor nor limit the level of commercial horse use in the Warner Valley area. It also would allow for the boarding of private party horses at the Drakesbad Guest Ranch corral. There would be no carrying capacity limits and no resource protection studies would be conducted to determine the appropriate level of use. There are already clear signs that the level of use under the no-action alternative is and would continue to be too high. There are deep ruts in the trails used for the commercial horse rides. This is leading to moderate levels of compaction and minor levels of erosion. There is also an unnatural pooling of water in these deep ruts.

Cumulative Impacts. The primary adverse soil impacts occurring as a result of other past and ongoing actions are compaction and erosion, resulting from development and concentrated visitor use in the Park, and the existence of a number of abandoned sites where soils have been disturbed and revegetation has not been undertaken. In the summer of 2003, the old abandoned downhill ski area adjacent to the site of the future Southwest Visitor Services Facility was restored by removing old concrete footings, obliterating old service roads and revegetating the area. Also in the summer of 2003, half of the park road was overlaid with new asphalt. These projects contributed to both beneficial and adverse impacts to soils. From a parkwide standpoint the amount of area affected by past and possible future projects is not substantial and soil impacts are relatively minor. Impacts from the above actions, together with the impacts of the no-action alternative, would result in minor adverse cumulative impacts to soils in the Park. The no-action alternative would contribute a negligible, long-term, adverse increment to total cumulative effects on soils in the Park.

Conclusion. The no-action alternative would have a minor, long-term, adverse effect, but would not impair soils in the Warner Valley area. No other areas, except for Warner Valley, would have any impacts to soils under the no-action alternative.

Impacts on Soils for Alternative 2 (Preferred)

The preferred Alternative would limit the number of commercial horse rides in Warner Valley based on a resource protection study that would be undertaken in the future. Commercial horseback riding would be limited by appropriate carrying capacities and designated trails would be established. Boarding of private

party horses would not be authorized in the Warner Valley area of the park under this alternative. This would result in a reduction of the soil compaction and erosion that is occurring, and would continue to occur, under the no-action alternative.

Cumulative Impacts. The primary cumulative adverse soil impacts are the same as those listed above under the no-action alternative. Impacts from those actions, together with the beneficial impacts of the preferred alternative, would result in minor adverse cumulative impacts to soils in the Park. The preferred alternative would contribute a negligible, long-term, beneficial increment to total cumulative effects on soils in the Park.

Conclusion. The preferred alternative would have a long-term, minor, beneficial effect, and would not impair soils in the project area.

Visitor Experience

Affected Environment

Visitation at Lassen Volcanic National Park is highly seasonal. While some use of the park occurs during the winter season by cross-country skiers and snow shoers, significant visitation levels do not occur until the main road can be opened. July and August are the peak visitation months, accounting for approximately half of the annual visitation. The four-month period from June to September accounts for approximately 80 percent of the annual visitation.

The great preponderance of park visitation occurs along the main park road, where most of the park's recreation facilities and interpretive displays are found. The road also provides ready access to a number of backcountry destinations. Approximately 80 percent of the Park's visitors enter the Park through the Southwest Entrance. Entries on the north side of the park (where there is a small museum with interpretive displays) are highly concentrated on summer weekends, reflecting heavy weekend use by Redding area residents. In contrast, entries at the Southwest entrance reveal significant weekday use, suggesting longer duration trips from areas outside the immediate region.

Commercial services such as food, gifts, educational sales, and rustic lodging are an integral part of making the visitor experience an enjoyable one at Lassen Volcanic National Park.

Impacts on Visitor Experience for Alternative 1 (No Action)

Visitor enjoyment would be adversely affected under the no-action alternative. There would continue to be no indoor seating at the Camper Store at Manzanita Lake and no commercial fishing instruction at Manzanita Lake. There would be no sale of convenience items at the Warner Valley Ranger Station, reservations at the Drakesbad Lodge and Dining Room would continue to be difficult for some visitors to obtain, and not all park visitors could use the pool at Drakesbad. At Butte and Juniper Lakes there would be no sales of convenience items at the Ranger Stations. Furthermore, the interpretive abilities of concession staff throughout the park would continue to be limited due to a lack of training and certification. All of the above items would lead to a minor, long-term adverse effect on visitor experience. On the other hand, the continued authorization to board privately owned horses at Drakesbad, under this alternative, would be a minor, beneficial effect to a very small number of visitors.

Cumulative Impacts A number of development projects (e.g. construction of the Southwest Visitor Services Facility, improving safety on several dirt roads and re-paving 22 miles of the Main Park Road) could occur within the Park as defined in the Park's General Management Plan (NPS 2003). These actions could cause minor, short-term adverse effects and major long-term beneficial effects. The potential adverse and beneficial effects of these actions, together with the effects of the no action alternative, would continue to result in major beneficial cumulative impacts.

Conclusion. The no action alternative would have a minor, long-term, adverse effect but would not impair visitor experience.

Impacts on Visitor Experience for Alternative 2 (Preferred)

Visitor enjoyment would be beneficially affected under the preferred alternative. All of the items listed above as not being added under the no-action alternative, would be added under the preferred alternative.

Cumulative Impacts. The primary cumulative effects to visitor experience are the same as those listed above under the no-action alternative. Impacts from these actions, together with the impacts from the preferred alternative, would continue to result in major beneficial cumulative impacts.

Conclusion. The preferred alternative would have a minor, long-term, beneficial effect and would not impair visitor experience.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

A press release initiating the public scoping process and comment period was issued in early August, 2002, and was published in the Red Bluff Daily News on August 12, 2002. Also in early August of 2002, a newsletter was sent to 245 organizations, agencies, and individuals notifying them about the start of the planning process for the Commercial Services Plan and of upcoming public scoping meetings.

Public scoping meetings for this plan were held in 2002 in Chico (August 19), Red Bluff (August 21), Redding (August 20), and Chester (August 22). They were an open house format with information displayed to generate discussion with park and planning team staff. A total of 32 people participated in the meetings and 6 individuals mailed comment letters to the park.

In August, 2004, a second newsletter was sent to the same 245 organizations, agencies, tribes, and individuals, informing them about the comments received during the scoping period, the alternatives being formed, and the future timeline for the plan.

This EA will be available for a **thirty-day** public review period. At that time, a press release will be distributed to people and businesses who have expressed an interest in the Commercial Services Plan. The press release will also be mailed to a list of persons and agencies that have expressed interest in Lassen Volcanic National Park proposed actions and events. The EA will also be mailed to local libraries, organizations and individuals that have requested to receive a copy of the EA as well as others who request copies during the review period. This EA will also be available on the park's website, located at <http://www.nps.gov/lavo.html>.

Because there would be no effect on listed or candidate species from the alternatives in this Environmental Assessment, no further Section 7 (Endangered Species Act) consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is necessary for this plan.

Because there would be no effect on cultural resources from the alternatives in this Environmental Assessment, no Section 106 (National Historic Preservation Act) consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Office is necessary for this plan.

Comments on this Environmental Assessment should be directed to:

Superintendent
Lassen Volcanic National Park
P.O. Box 100
Mineral, California 96063

If reviewers do not identify substantial environmental impacts, this Environmental Assessment will be used to prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), which will be sent to the National Park Service Pacific West Regional Director for signature.

For more information concerning this Environmental Assessment, please contact the park Superintendent at (530) 595-4444, extension 5101. For a copy of this document, please call Lassen Volcanic National Park at (530) 595-4444, extension 5176.

LIST OF PREPARERS AND CONSULTANTS

Debra Frein, Compliance Program Manager, Lassen Volcanic National Park
Terry Goodrich, Lead Commercial Services Planner, Denver, National Park Service
Karen Haner, Chief of Interpretation and Cultural Resources, Lassen Volcanic National Park
Louise Johnson, Chief of Natural Resources, Lassen Volcanic National Park
Dan Jones, Chief of Maintenance, Lassen Volcanic National Park
Cari Kreshak, Cultural Resources Program Manager, Lassen Volcanic National Park
Marilyn H. Parris, Superintendent, Lassen Volcanic National Park
John Roth, Chief Ranger, Lassen Volcanic National Park
Karen Stoll, Former Chief of Administration, Lassen Volcanic National Park

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APPENDIX A - COMMERCIAL SERVICES EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of commercial services to be provided takes place at two distinct stages of the planning process. First, as part of the development of a *Commercial Services Plan*, the park develops an evaluation process for commercial services and uses it to determine whether its existing and proposed services are necessary and/or appropriate. Secondly, as the plan is implemented, the park uses this evaluation process to respond to requests from those wishing to provide a particular service.

The National Park Service (NPS) may also use this process to analyze recommendations from other agencies, special use groups, or NPS employees for proposed commercial activities or services believed necessary and/or appropriate for any of the various commercial authorizations.

This section identifies the steps that the National Park Service at Lassen Volcanic National Park will use in thoroughly reviewing and analyzing prospective commercial activities and proposals during the development of the *Commercial Services Plan*. By developing Evaluation Criteria for Lassen Volcanic National Park as suggested in Sample A-1, the park establishes a consistent and fair evaluation process for all services and proposed requests. Maintaining a list of approved and non-approved activities, along with a clear record of factors leading to an NPS decision, will allow the park to respond to requests to conduct these activities efficiently and consistently.

In evaluating a potential commercial activity, it is beneficial to first consider whether the activity is appropriate, by measuring the activity against the laws, policies and regulations governing the park area. If these do not prohibit the activity, and it promotes the furtherance of the mission for the park area, the activity is appropriate.

Some appropriate activities will also be necessary in order for the park to fulfill its mission. If a park determines that a commercial service is both necessary and appropriate, and it is not currently provided through a contract, the park will enter the process of developing a prospectus for a contract for the provision of this service. This determination may be generated during the development of the Commercial Services Plan, or in response to a request from an individual or organization. All NECESSARY and APPROPRIATE commercial services must be placed under a contract. Any individual or organization may respond to a prospectus after it is issued.

All laws and policies applying to the development and issuance of concessions contracts must be followed.

If a park determines through the evaluation process that a commercial service is not necessary, but is appropriate, it may use further evaluation to determine what type of permit should be issued. Various considerations may lead to the park determining that various operational limits should be placed on the activity. These considerations will be encountered and dealt with through the evaluation process, and also during the issuance of the permit itself.

Generally, the pattern to be followed by the park upon receipt of a request is to determine:

1. Is this a request for a commercial service, or some other type of activity? If it is for another type of activity, the request should be passed on to the person in the park responsible for such.
2. Is this a request for an appropriate commercial service? If it is, or appears to be, the park should send the requester an application, and follow the processes appropriate to issuing a commercial use authorization for an appropriate kind and level of service.
3. Is this a request for a necessary and appropriate commercial service? If it is, the park should invite the requester to enter the prospectus process when it occurs. This may involve saying no for the moment. Such requests should be tracked and honored when the prospectus becomes available.

Updates to the *Commercial Services Plan*, including changes to the list of approved activities, will be initiated by the National Park Service as circumstances change. Initially, updates could be anticipated every two to three years. However, the superintendent could delay or initiate an update.

Figure A-1 is an example of a commercial services evaluation rating form to be completed by an interdisciplinary NPS team in response to commercial proposals. Following the sample form is a point by point explanatory breakdown of the various sections of the form so that the reader or evaluation panel can interpret its intent.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES EVALUATION RATING FORM

Type of Service _____

Name of Applicant _____ Date _____

CRITERIA	EVALUATION (+ or -) **	COMMENTS
LEGAL/POLICY		
Compliance with GMP		
GMP Management		
Law and Policy		
Park Mission		
NEPA & NHPA		
Concession Contract		
VISITOR USE / EXPERIENCE ISSUES		
Public Safety		
Education &		
Social & Resources		
RESOURCE ISSUES		
Cultural/Historic		
Natural Resources		
Aesthetic Resources		
OPERATION ISSUES		
Land Requirements		
Staffing Needs		
Infrastructure/Services		
OTHER ISSUES	Discussion	Not rated
Partnership Opportunities		
New Activities		
Cumulative Effects		
Recommendation	Additional Comments and Recommendations	
Approved		
Disapproved		
Resubmit		
Other Issues		

** + = beneficial affect for park, no legal or policy restrictions
 - = negative impact for park and visitors

If negative impacts outweigh benefits, discussion of overall merits by interdisciplinary team will determine whether an activity is authorized.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All existing and proposed commercial activities at Lassen Volcanic National Park will be evaluated to determine if they are necessary and/or appropriate. This exercise establishes an initial list of approved activities, which may be subsequently updated. Individual applications to provide commercial services will also be evaluated to identify conditions or stipulations to be added to a contract or commercial use authorization.

An evaluation form (figure A-1) can be used to ensure a consistent review of all activities and applications. The criteria used in the evaluation include legal, recreation, resource, management, and other issues. These criteria are derived from the preceding discussion of park purpose, significance, and desired futures that were taken directly from the *General Management Plan*. The criteria form the basis of the evaluation process.

How each criteria on the evaluation form are reviewed and how a final recommendation is made is explained below in the specific sections corresponding to the form. The evaluation also identifies which type of authorization is appropriate for new proposals.

LEGAL AND POLICY ISSUES

Federal, state, and local laws, rules, codes, and regulations will be reviewed to determine if the activity would comply with law and NPS policies related to that activity. Any violation or conflict with a law or regulation would result in rejection of the proposal or application.

The regulations, guidelines, and laws used to evaluate new proposals for compliance with existing concessions policy would include, but not be limited to:

- CFR 36 - 2.22, Property
- CFR 36 - 2.52, Sale or Distribution of Printed Material
- CFR 36 - 2.61, Residing on Federal Lands
- CFR 36 - 5, Commercial and Private Operations
- CFR 36 - 51, Concessions Contracts and Permits
- U.S. Public Health Service, FDA Food Code, 1993
- NPS-48 *Concessions Guideline*
- NPS-50 *Loss Control Management Program Guideline*

NPS-53 Special Park Uses

SD-95-10 Incidental Business Permit

General Management Plan

Park Compendium

Wilderness Plan

Various management plans

Compliance with GMP. If a proposed activity would be in conflict with the guidance and direction outlined in the General Management Plan, it would not be authorized.

GMP Management Prescriptions. Management zones are used to describe the desired mix of resource conditions and visitor experiences to be achieved in different areas of the park. Eight zones are identified at Lassen Volcanic National Park: Wilderness, Winter Backcountry, Scenic Drive, Summer Developed, Winter Developed, Remote Unit Access Road, Administration, and Inholder Zone

Wilderness Zone: This zone, encompassing a majority of the park, consists of legislatively designated wilderness and lands considered for proposed designation. It is managed consistent with the Wilderness Act and National Park Service policies regarding wilderness.

Winter Backcountry Zone: This zone goes into effect when the main park road is closed for the winter season. It includes the entire park except the Wilderness, Administrative, Remote Unit Access Road, and Winter Development Zones.

Scenic Drive Zone (Summer): This zone includes the main park road extending from Highway 44 junction at the north entrance to the southwest entrance. It encompasses the paved roads, pullouts, overlooks, and associated trails and small picnic areas, parking areas, and other facilities that support visitor touring. It includes Manzanita Lake, Emerald Lake, Reflection Lake, Devastated Area, Sulphur Works, Lake Helen, Lassen Peak Trail, and Bumpass Hell Trail.

Remote Unit Access Road Zone (Summer): This zone encompasses the major access roads serving Butte Lake, Juniper Lake, and Warner Valley areas.

Summer Developed Zone: This zone includes areas with major visitor facilities that are accessible and usable in the summer months. Visitor service facilities, concession facilities, ranger stations, and major campgrounds and picnic areas are included in the developed zone.

Winter Developed Zone: This zone includes areas with major visitor facilities that are accessible and usable in the winter months. Visitor service facilities, concession facilities, and ranger stations are included in the developed zone.

Administrative zone: This zone includes the developed areas used for administration and maintenance. Included in this zone are major administrative areas at headquarters and Manzanita Lake, minor service roads for administrative use, and minor administrative structures and utility features.

Inholder zone: This zone includes the two areas of inholdings within the park, Hat Creek and Juniper Lake. The total area of the zone is approximately 5.66 acres. Within the zone are 14 privately owned tracts.

FIGURE A-2: LAND USE ZONES/SUBZONES AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Zone	Management Strategy
Wilderness Zone	Manage for appropriate visitor behavior through education and limit visitor numbers. Onsite controls and restrictions are minimized and those that are present are subtle.
Winter Backcountry Zone	Management is similar to wilderness. Resource protection is achieved through education, control of numbers, and patrols. No additional development in this zone, except for signing to facilitate visitor use or park management.
Scenic Drive Zone (Summer)	Manage intensively with patrols, trail, road and roadside facility maintenance, interpretive media and activities. Development is evident but designed to harmonize with natural environment.
Remote Unit Access Road Zone (Summer)	Patrols occur for visitor and resource protection. Onsite controls and restrictions are subtle, such as berms, rocks, or vegetation to prevent vehicles from leaving the road. Some development is evident.
Summer Developed Zone	Manage for high level of visitor protection and safety through patrols, wayside exhibits, and interpretive programs. Facilities are rustic and landscaping employs native plants. Buildings, structures, and signs predominate.
Winter Developed Zone	Manage for high level of visitor protection and safety through patrols, wayside exhibits, and interpretive programs.
Administrative Zone	Manage for high level of protection and safety. Buildings, structures, and utilities predominate. Sensitive management for historic settings and landscapes. Landscaping employs native plants.
Inholder Zone	Manage in partnership with property owners to achieve mutual goals. Tracts that are acquired through offer for sale will be rezoned as appropriate.

It is NPS policy that rights-of-way across land administered by the National Park Service may be issued only pursuant to specific statutory authority and only if there is no practical alternative to such use. Rights-of-way, easements, and special use permits are all land assignments that authorize various uses of public land. The proposed activity will be reviewed to ensure that it would not conflict with legislation or land assignments and that there would not be impacts on park values. In cases where a land use conflict exists, the established or permitted land assignment would prevail.

Law and Policy. If a proposed activity would be in conflict with law, regulation, or policy it would not be authorized until changes are made to mitigate the conflict.

Park Mission. If a proposed activity is in conflict with the stated mission of the park as outlined in the *General Management Plan* and other documents it will not be authorized until changes are made to mitigate the conflict.

The mission of the Park is to conserve, preserve, and protect Lassen Volcanic National Park and its geological, biological, and cultural resources for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of present and future generations.

Additional data is available in the *Strategic Plan* (NPS 2003b).

NEPA & NHPA. If a proposed activity requires documentation of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (as defined in NPS Director's Order 12) or requires consultation and documentation of compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act it will not be authorized until such documentation has been completed or changes have been made to the proposal that no longer require such compliance. The proposed activity will not be approved if compliance with NEPA and NHPA cannot be achieved.

Every permit request will be reviewed by the Park's interdisciplinary compliance council and will be assessed in compliance with NEPA on an individual basis. Permits will be evaluated on an individual basis rather than assessing a category of permits within this document. In order to determine potential impacts, specific information about the proposed activity would be needed, such as the number of visitors that will partake in the activity and where the activity is proposed to take place. This document lists the types of activities that have gone through the commercial services evaluation process; however, when an individual applies for a permit under one of these approved categories, their permit request will then go through the NEPA process.

The Concessions Contract. Are there conflicts with an authorized service already provided by a concessioner under a concession contract? Check carefully whether a concessioner has exclusive rights to provide a service, or has preferential right to provide new and additional services, as is sometimes found in older contracts.

VISITOR USE/EXPERIENCE ISSUES

These criteria help measure impacts on the visitor experience and ensure compliance with NPS goals and objectives for suitable visitor activities.

Public Safety. Promoting safety is a high priority. All permits issued should incorporate safety measures to promote a safe visitor experience. Proposals for activities should recognize potential hazards and offer methods for mitigating them (although the park may choose to require other methods).

Education and Interpretation. The themes of any activity should conform with the purposes for which the park was established. The park may choose to require a certain level of interpretive purpose and meaning within the provision of a commercial service, and the provider should work within the park's interpretive guidelines to do so.

Social & Resources Carrying Capacity. Some locations and activities may be extremely popular. There may be potential for conflicts between commercial and non-commercial users, and for localized crowding and congestion. Crowding could detract from visitor experience and increase impacts on the associated resources. When crowding, congestion, traffic impacts or conflicts occur, use limits will be established to protect both visitor experience and park resources.

RESOURCE ISSUES

Cultural/Historic Resources. Cultural resources are defined as the remains of past human activity that have the potential to describe and explain human behavior (NPS-28). The presence of numerous cultural resources lends significance to the purpose of setting aside land for the public trust. All proposed commercial activities will be evaluated based on their impact on these fragile, nonrenewable resources. If there is a potential for impact to the cultural or historic environment, documentation of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act must be completed before the proposed activity will be approved.

Natural Resources. The effect of any proposed activity on natural resources such as plants, wildlife, water and air must be considered. If there is a potential for impact to the natural or physical environment, or the relationship of people with that environment, documentation of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act must be completed before the proposed activity will be approved.

Aesthetic Resources. Impacts on aesthetic resources can have a significant impact on the experiences of commercial clients and typical visitors. Such resources might include quiet, solitude, scenery (other than cultural landscapes), space, a sense of history, sounds of nature, air quality and clear night skies. Commercial activity requests are evaluated for impacts on aesthetic resources. If such impacts appear likely, the proposal would be adjusted to mitigate those issues or disapproved.

OPERATION ISSUES

Commercial activities of all types create a demand on the National Park Service for management oversight. Time and effort are required to issue various authorizations, monitor activities for compliance with permit restrictions, collect fees, assign and maintain support facilities, etc. Often these activities require the attention and commitment of park staff at the expense of providing for the general public and noncommercial visitors.

Land Requirements. Facilities (to include all land developments) are not authorized for commercial use authorizations. In order to be given a land assignment, the activity must be both necessary and appropriate, and the authorization must be issued in the form of a concession contract.

Staffing Needs. The amount of staff time for processing an application, the approval/rejection and evaluation process, and subsequent authorization and monitoring requirements are all considerations in what type or level of activity is approved. For example, the following definitions of complexity might apply for monitoring:

1. High: the successful monitoring of the activity would include administrative, compliance, and onsite contact with the operation on a weekly basis.
2. Medium: Successful monitoring would include administrative, compliance, and onsite contact on a biweekly to monthly basis.
3. Low: Successful monitoring would include administrative, compliance, and onsite contact with the operation on a monthly to quarterly basis.

Infrastructure/Services. Many commercial activities require support facilities and/or services provided by the National Park Service such as parking spaces, restrooms, changing rooms, water and other utilities, and picnic areas. Such support activities have an overall impact on available budget and financial resources to provide and maintain the facilities and services, and possible impacts on natural and cultural resources. When the demand for commercial services combined with non-commercial use exceeds the

supply of support facilities and services, the proposed commercial activity might be denied or the proposal modified.

OTHER ISSUES

Local situations and conditions that are not anticipated would be identified on a case-by-case basis. A brief definition of the situation would be written and attached to the evaluation form as necessary. Among issues to be considered:

Partnership Opportunities. The National Park Service accomplishes its mission partly through support and partnerships with neighboring communities, agencies, organizations, and individuals. Activities and proposals are evaluated not only for their effect on the park but for effects on neighbors, especially when issues are the subject of cooperative arrangements.

New Activities. Proposals for activities not currently available could create new and different effects on resources and visitor experiences. New activities should be evaluated more thoroughly than current activities whose impact is already known.

Cumulative Effects. Activities and proposals would be evaluated to determine if they could contribute to adverse effects when added to other commercial services in the region.

LIST OF PROPOSED AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES:

Bus Tours
Step on Guides
Guided hiking/backpacking
Eco tours
Survival skills
Winter activities
Painting/photo tours
Tow truck service
Emergency services (EMS flight)
Lock out service
Air Tours
Fishing guides
Kayaking/Canoe trips
Mountaineering guides (climbing)

LIST OF DISAPPROVED ACTIVITIES:

Hiker shuttle
Stock/packing trips (horse, llama, goat, etc) of a commercial nature
Yurts (hut to hut) winter accommodations
Bicycle touring
Hang gliding and other activities not allowed per Superintendent's compendium