

Inyo National Forest

Framework for Responding to Climate Change

Upper San Joaquin Area

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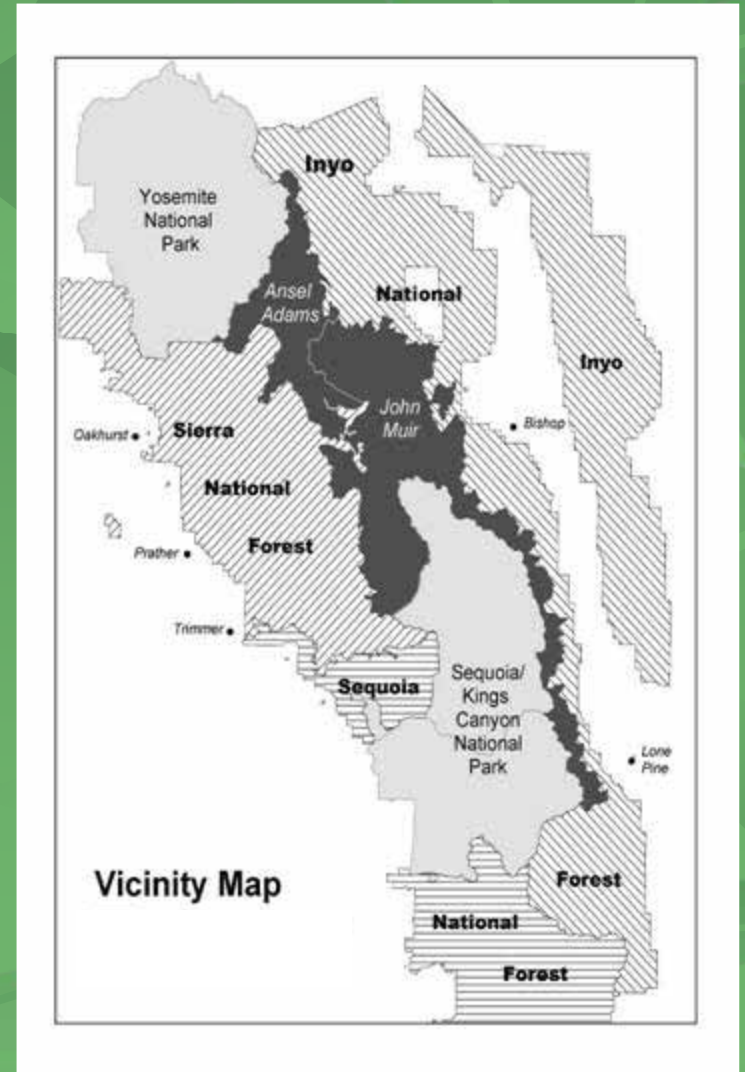
Introduction

- Upper Middle Fork of the San Joaquin is one of the most biologically rich and ecologically important areas along the Eastern Sierra/Sierra Divide.
- The Upper San Joaquin Recreation Area (USJRA) is a major attraction on the Inyo National Forest.
- Opportunity to provide improved resource protection and visitor experience with an emphasis on the ecological role of the basin and adaptation to climate change.



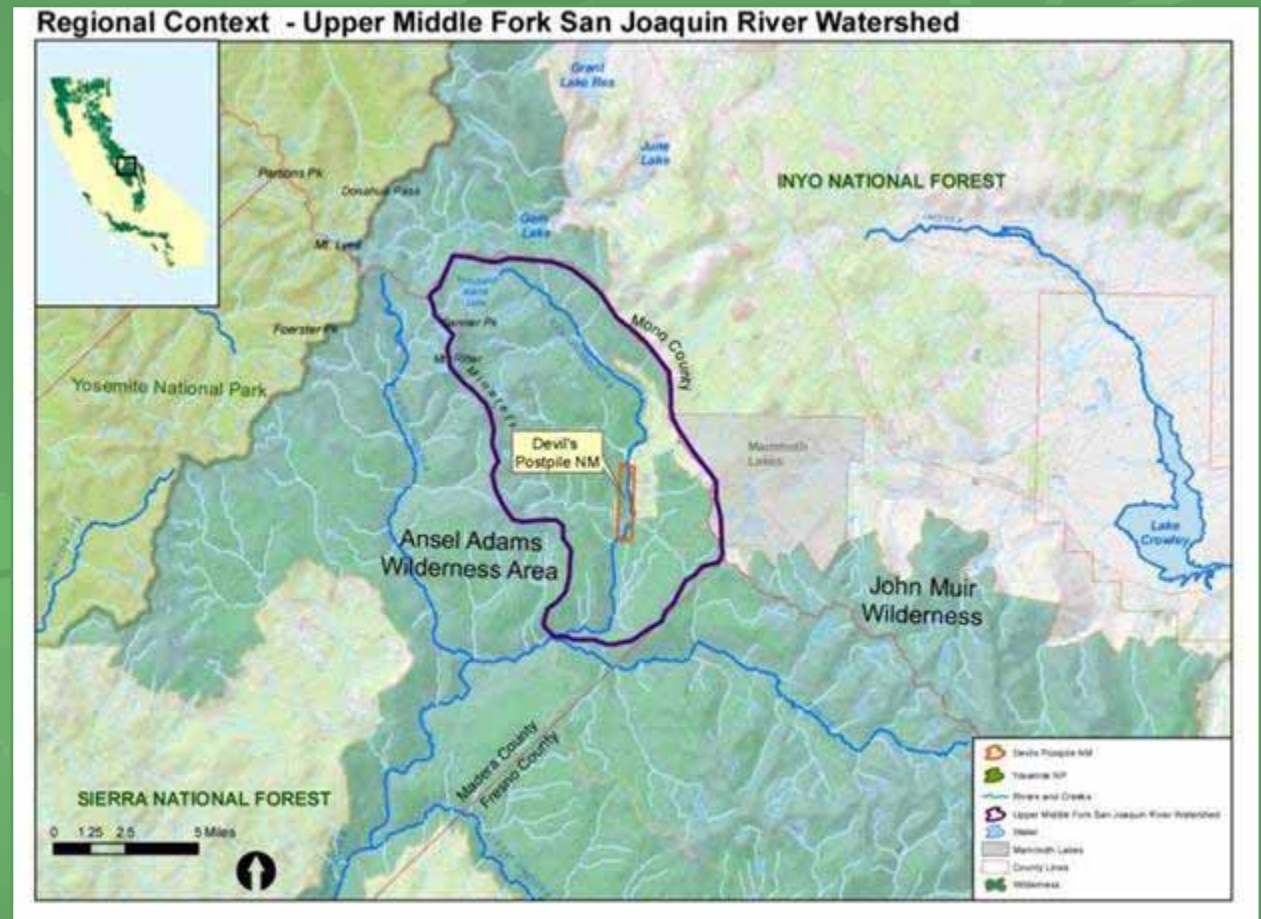
Inyo National Forest Background

- Recreation focused forest
 - 4 million visitors annually
 - 2 million acres in size
- Major attractions:
 - Mono Lake Basin
 - Mt. Whitney
 - John Muir/Ansel Adams Wilderness and the John Muir Trail
 - Mammoth Mountain Ski Area
 - Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest
 - Reds Meadow/USJRA
(*Subject of today's discussion*)



Upper San Joaquin Recreation Area

- AKA “Red’s Meadow” or “Devils Postpile NM”
- Headwaters for the Middle Fork San Joaquin River
- Portal to Ansel Adams & John Muir Wilderness
- Major Recreation Destination for Mammoth Lakes



Recreation Visitors in the USJRA

- Attractions:
 - Devil's Postpile National Monument (NPS)
 - Hiking, fishing, camping, nature exploration
 - Reds Meadow Resort
 - Major Portal to Wilderness
 - PCT & JMT Trails
 - FS & NPS Infrastructure
 - Tradition of Repeat Visitation



Forest Service Mission

Sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations

Forest Service Goals to meet mission under changing climate

- **Science** – Advance understanding of climate change
- **Adaptation** – Enhance the capacity of forests and grasslands to adapt
- **Mitigation** – Promote the management of forests and grasslands to reduce the buildup of greenhouse gases.
- **Policy** – Integrate climate change into FS policies, programs and communication.
- **Sustainable Operations** – Reduce the environmental footprint
- **Education** – Advance awareness and understanding
- **Alliances** – Establish, enhance and retain strong alliances and partnerships

Science

- Science – Working with NPS and PSW Research
- Encourage climate change research activities on the Forest
 - Ancient Bristlecone Pine
 - PSW Research



Adaptation

- Restore forest and grassland health and reduce risk of severe wildfire and pest outbreaks
- Crossroad of Climates
 - 400+ Plant species, 100+ bird species, 35 mammals (12 species bats)
 - Critical Migration Route
- Reduce impacts from high recreation use in Upper San Joaquin
- Monitor water quality and quantity



Mitigation

- Balancing carbon sequestration with other ecosystem services
- Managing forest resources to offset fossil fuels
- Snowmaking



Policy

- Chief has made climate change a top issue
- Revised Forest Plan
- NEPA documents



Sustainable Operations



- 2nd Largest Transit Operation in the Eastern Sierra
 - High Visitation: 50,000+ annual riders
- 30 years of FS Shuttle Operation
 - Challenges with Federal Contracting Authority
 - Annual variation in costs yet requires multi-year contract

Eastern Sierra Transit

- Future Focused with Partnership Potential & Expansions
- Growth and Stability of ESTA Important for Community
- Standard Local Operation (Links from Reno to Lancaster) plus...
 - Mammoth Lakes Trolley
 - Connections with YARTS (Yosemite, Fresno, & beyond...)



Education

- Provide outstanding interpretive services with messages on climate change, continue to provide world class destinations, protect fragile resources
- Better communicate science based messages
- Kids in the Woods



Alliances

- Joint planning efforts with NPS
- Partnerships with Friends Group
- Cooperation with community groups and Town of Mammoth Lakes



One Step at a Time

- Mission is an integral part of Forest Service identity
- Climate change one of the greatest challenges
- Future is uncertain so need to be nimble and willing to learn from mistakes

