



## VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY

# Alpine Lakes Wilderness

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Collaborative Management
- Wilderness regulations
- Overnight Use Permits

## FACTS

**700+**

lakes and ponds that comprise delicate ecosystems

**394,000 acres**

of Wilderness within the Cascades of WA

## MORE INFORMATION

[Alpine Lakes Management Plan Stewardship Web Page](#)

## SUMMARY

The 1981 Alpine Lakes Area Use Management Plan was updated in 1993 to address increased recreation and ecological concerns. Regulations introduced in 1995 and amended in 2011 aimed to prevent environmental damage and maintain a clean recreation environment free of trash, human waste, and damage to trail systems. A collaborative approach, facilitated by the Alpine Lakes Collaborative, is currently underway to update visitor use management approaches across the entire Alpine Lakes Wilderness. This effort involves partnerships with organizations such as the Society for Wilderness Stewardship, USFS, Friends of the Enchantments, and the Washington Trails Association.

## MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Various management outcomes were derived from past visitor use planning decisions including campfire restrictions, designated camping sites, and establishing restricted livestock areas and livestock camps. Overnight camping permits are required for the Enchantments area. However, this has resulted in an unintended consequence of more people attempting to complete the 19-mile “Core Enchantments” loop in a day, leading to safety and crowding. This and other impacts to wilderness character from increasing use led to the need to update visitor use management approaches across the wilderness. The collaborative assessments and engagements will inform new visitor use management decisions through the National Environmental Policy Act by the Forest Service