

Golden Trout Wilderness and Fishing Information

Sequoia National Forest

The 303,287-acre Golden Trout Wilderness (GTW) was designated by Congress in 1978. Of this total, 111,146 acres is on the Sequoia National Forest, and the remainder on the Inyo National Forest.

WILDERNESS

"...an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where the man himself is a visitor who does not remain." It is important that we preserve the natural condition of wilderness.

NOMENCLATURE

The Golden Trout Wilderness was named for the brightly colored native golden trout (CA state fish). Two subspecies are recognized: South Fork Kern golden trout, and the Little Kern golden trout. Both are found in the GTW.

DESCRIPTION

On the Sequoia National Forest portion of the GTW, elevations range from 4,700 feet at the forks of the Kern River to 12,432 feet on Mt. Florence, the highest peak on the Forest. Vegetation ranges from grey and pinyon pine woodlands at lower elevations; extensive Jeffrey pine forests at mid-elevations; and red fir, lodgepole and foxtail pine at higher elevations. Portions of the GTW occur above timberline. Most of the Little Kern River drainage lies within the Wilderness. The North and South Forks of the Kern Wild and Scenic rivers bisect this Wilderness.

LOCATION AND ACCESS

The GTW that lies within Sequoia National Forest is bordered in part by Sequoia National Park on the north, and Mountain Home State Forest on the west. Approximately 150

miles of trails for horses and hikers are located on the Sequoia National Forest portion. These trails can be accessed from Hwy 190 near Quaking Aspen via Forest Service Road 21S50 which leads to Summit, Clicks and Lewis Camp trailheads; Balch Park road to Mountain Home State Forest, Shake Camp trailhead; Sherman Pass Rd or Hwy 395 via Nine Mile Road to Blackrock trailhead.

FISHING AND HUNTING

Special California Fish and Game restrictions apply in the GTW when fishing. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used; LIMITS VARY. Check current California Fish and Game regulations for specifics. Fishing season in the GTW is open the last Saturday in April through November 15th. Hunting is allowed in season. Check current California Fish and Game regulations.

DRINKING WATER

Water is available but should be used after proper treatment. It is recommended that water be boiled for 5 minutes and/or filtered prior to use.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

You may encounter cattle grazing which has been a part of the local scene for a hundred years or more. Most present day trails were originally established by stockmen many years ago before areas were designated as Wilderness areas. The historical "old west" culture survives today as a vital, active and unique component of the area. It is perpetuated by present day cattlemen as they drive their stock over historic trails, use pack-stock to supply cowcamps built of native materials, and cook over woodstoves by lantern light as

their ancestors did in the 1800's with some important exceptions.

Livestock operations are now controlled by a permit system based on guidelines established in Grazing Allotment Management Plans and Forest Land and Resource Management Plans.

WILDERNESS ETHICS

Practice LEAVE NO TRACE! Please stay on the trail; cutting switchbacks causes erosion. If you have to hike off trail, please hike on durable surfaces and avoid fragile areas such as meadows. Select a campsite on a hard dry surface such as rock, sand, gravel, or pine needle duff, not on vegetation or meadows. Make sure that your campsite is at least 100 feet from water sources and trails. Pack out all you pack in. Bury body waste at least 6 inches deep and 100 feet from rivers and streams. Keep fires small and make sure they're DEAD OUT when you leave.

PROPER USE OF STOCK

Avoid overgrazing in meadows, excessive trampling and polluting waterways. Between July 1 and October 1, good forage is usually available throughout the mountain meadows, but you need to pack in enough pellets or grain to provide daily supplements to green forage. For trips before or after these dates, plan on packing in all feed requirements.

Utilizing a hard ground area, tie pack and saddle stock a minimum of 100 feet from lakes, streams, trails or campsites. Preferred method would be to construct a hitch line between two trees 8 inches in diameter or more, tying horses to the hitch line. Move hitch line daily. Loose herding of stock is

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prohibited except in areas unsafe to tie together. Scatter manure to prevent odor and fly problems. Take proper precautions to prevent damage to trees, plants and soil from pawing and trampling.

WILDERNESS REGULATIONS

All mechanized vehicles and equipment including mountain bikes are prohibited within the Wilderness. A maximum group size of 15 people/25 head of stock per party has been adopted.

WILDERNESS PERMITS

Visitors to the GTW must obtain a Wilderness Permit if they plan on staying overnight. Campfire permits are also needed and you need to check for current fire regulations; restrictions may be in effect. These permits are FREE. Permits can be mailed or faxed in advance, if points of entry/exit and days of travel are known.

FISHING REGULATIONS MADE EASY

Everyone 16 years and over must have a California fishing license. Those under 16 years old must still obey all limits and size restrictions.

LAKE ISABELLA

Fishing on Lake Isabella is open all year and 24 hours a day.

Limits are as follows:

Black Bass including both Large Mouth Bass and Small Mouth Bass: 2 fish with a 15 inch minimum total length.

Trout and Salmon: 5 fish limit-combined.

Crappie: 25 fish limit-25 fish in possession.

Catfish: no limit

Bluegill and other Sunfish: no limit

Carp: no limit

Pike Minnow: no limit.
(Fishing regulations for the Valley District apply).

North Fork of the Kern River

A. From Lake Isabella to the Johnsondale Bridge.

Fishing on this section of river is open all year. Lures, bait, flies, etc. may be used. The regular California Fish and Game regulations for the Sierra District apply (5 trout limit and 10 trout in possession).

B. From the Johnsondale Bridge upstream 5.2 miles to trail number 33E30 is a special regulation area.

Fishing season on this section of river starts on the last Saturday in April and runs through the 15th of November. There is a minimum size of 14 inches total length and only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. There is a two fish limit with two fish in possession. Also between November 16th and the Friday before the last Saturday in April you may fish with artificial lures with barbless hooks and the limit is zero (only catch and release).

C. From trail 33E30 upstream to the mouth of Tyndall Creek is a special regulation area.

Fishing season on this section of river also runs from the last Saturday in April to the 15th of November. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. There is a 10-inch maximum size on Rainbow Trout on this section of river. The daily limit is 2 fish and 2 fish in possession combined.

TRIBUTARIES OF THE KERN RIVER- NORTH AND SOUTH FORKS

Fishing season on these tributaries is open from the last

Saturday in April through the 15th of November. Lures, bait, flies, etc. may be used. The regular California Fish and Game regulations for the Sierra District apply (5 trout limit and 10 trout in possession).

SOUTH FORK OF THE KERN RIVER

On the South Fork of the Kern River outside of the Golden Trout Wilderness fishing season starts on the last Saturday in April and continues until the 15th of November. Regular California fishing regulations for the Sierra District apply. The daily limit is 5 fish with 10 in possession.

GOLDEN TROUT WILDERNESS excluding the main stem of the Kern River

Fishing season in the Golden Trout Wilderness is open the last Saturday in April through November 15th. Only artificial lures with barbless hooks may be used. The limit is 5 trout a day and 5 trout in possession.

Regulation information taken from the California Sport Fishing Regulations California Department of Fish and Game.

*All information obtained from the US Department of Agriculture and the US Forest Service.