

# DOING MORE FOR LESS: USING CONSERVATION CORPS AS AN ORGANIZATION CAPACITY MULTIPLIER

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National Park



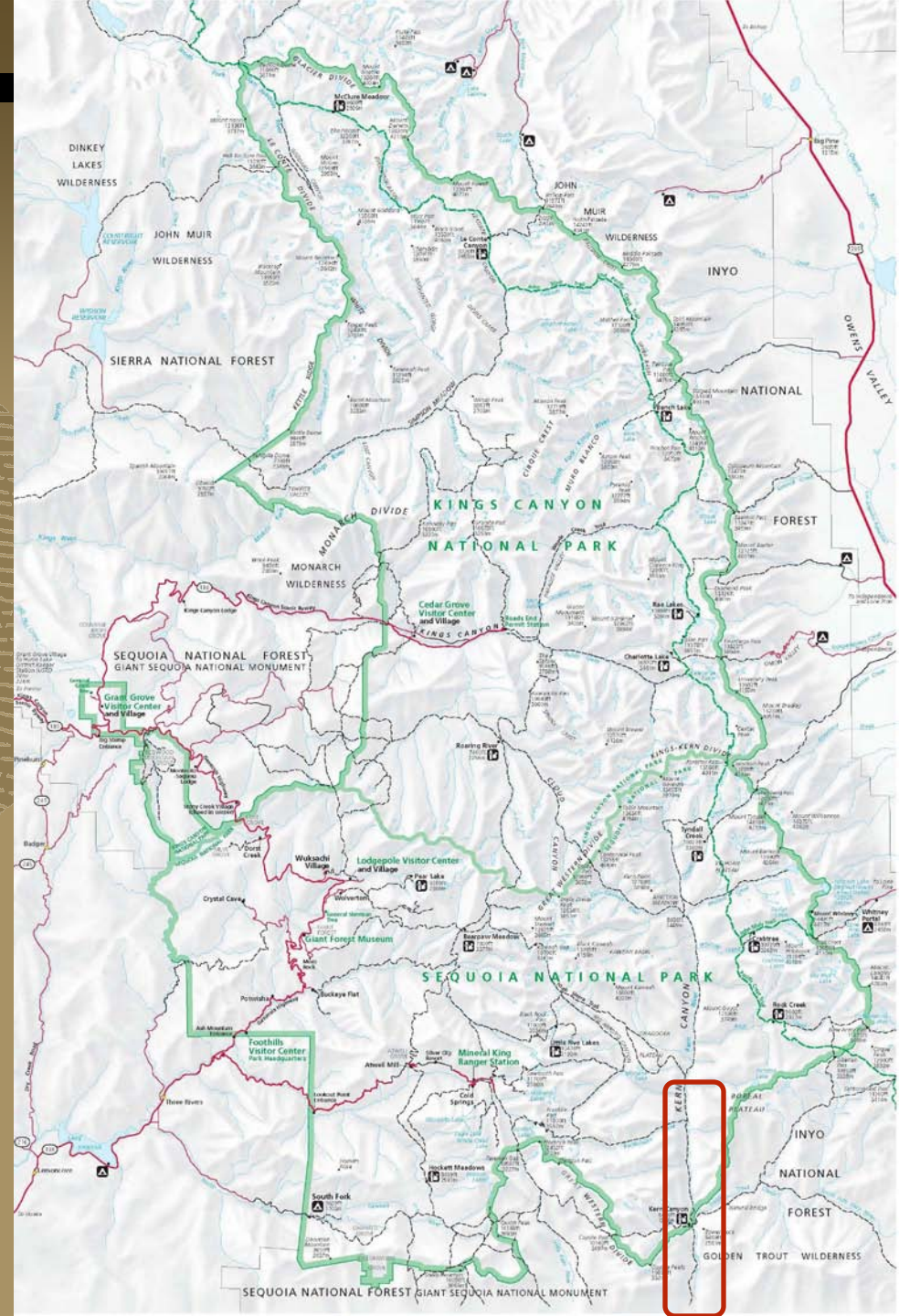


**Velvetgrass**  
*(Holcus lanatus)*  
**Control Efforts in the  
Kern Canyon**

Invasive Plant Program  
Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks  
(SEKI)

# Kern Canyon

- SE section of SEKI
- Extends into Seq NF
- Little development
- A very naturally-functioning watershed
- Sequoia/Kings Canyon NP
  - 865,964 acres
  - 96.7% Wilderness







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# Velvetgrass

- Perennial grass native to Europe
  - Originally brought to CA as forage species
  - Up to 240,000 seeds/plant
  - Spread by hikers, stock, water, etc.
  - Forms near monocultures in riparian zones in SEKI
    - Not yet widespread

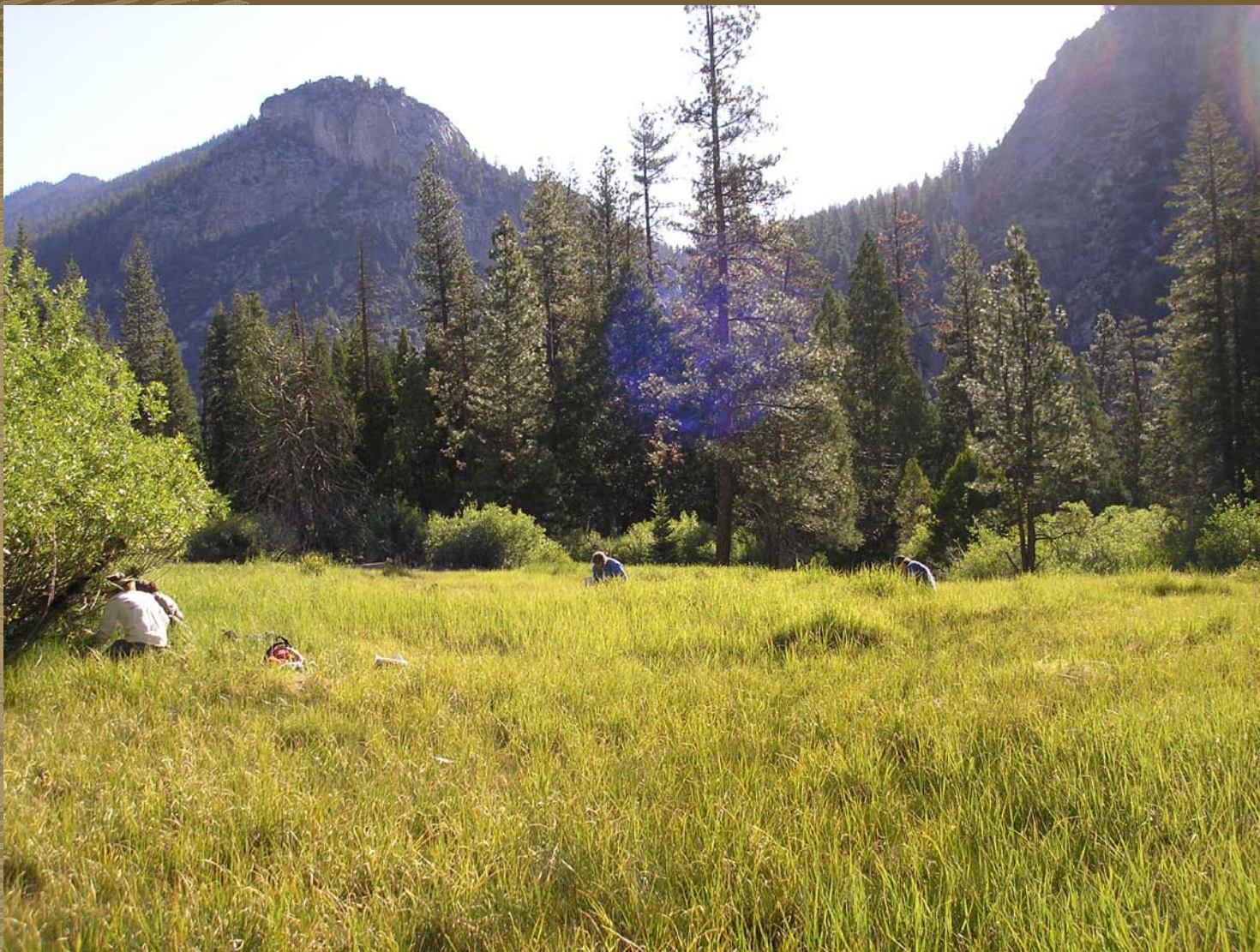


The Nature Conservancy, UC Davis photo

# History

- Discovered in the Kern (NPS) in 2005
- Surveys in 2006 revealed more infestations
  - Including USFS lands
  - 4 ac along 14 river miles
  - Meadows, seeps, riverbanks, tributaries, oxbow lakes
- 2007
  - Began hand-pulling with wilderness ranger
  - 3-person crew for 4 weeks
- 2008
  - Dedicated 3-peron crew for 6 weeks





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# Realization Point Not Nearly Enough

## Need

- More People
- More Time
- (To) Figure Out the Best Control Options
- So...Need Some More Funding

## Next Step

- Sought funding for a 3-year feasibility analysis
- Examine tarping, hand-pulling, and herbicide
- Include USFS infestations



# Results (2015)

- Prevented spread up canyon and side drainages
- Removed all parent plants
  - Including almost all on USFS lands
- 67% of the 97 sites produce <100 plants annually
- 47% of the 97 sites are absent of velvetgrass
- Large polys that produced 10,000s seedlings, now produce in the 100s
- Begin scaling back crews in 2016



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# Safety



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# Other Considerations

- Wilderness Protections
- Helicopter use discouraged
- Temporary “Installations”
  - & not visible to the public
- Resources “Unimpaired”
  - Leave No Trace
- Orientating the Crews
- Communications
- Affordable for Funding

Sources / A good Value





# American Conservation Experience -Advantages to NPS-

- Already “pre-formed” crews – no assembly required
- Experienced in backcountry field projects
- Self-supplied in gear, tools and equipment
- Supply their own food, kitchen & logistics
- Resupply capabilities in place throughout the West
- Local (CA) HQ – direct support & replacement resources (including crew) immediately available
- Nationwide cooperative agreement already in place
  - Task agreements under that umbrella are far easier
- IOW – Much less administrative & logistical work
- Finally.....They really wanted to do this.





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# STAFF CAPACITY INCREASE



- Large crew management
- People power
- Monitor/ manage crew productivity
- Long time scales with punctuated activity
- Time between project components
- Increase departmental reach
- Modulate staff levels without onboarding/ off boarding
- Document capacity for funders
- Add technical skillsets to your portfolio without hiring people









# STREAMLINE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION STAGES



- Uncover logistical needs
- Integrate workflows/ skillsets between agencies
- Develop implementation responsibilities
- Determine personnel costs/ create Budgets
- Mesh land management values
- Utilize existing logistical networks
- Existing communication assets









# LESSONS LEARNED



- Pack support and garbage management
- Back country travel (timing of hikes in and out)
- Know background of group members before crew is in the back country







Guess where our  
latrine is?





# LESSONS LEARNED



- Pack support and garbage management
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- Managing the public's wilderness experience









# LESSONS LEARNED



- Pack support and garbage management
- Back country travel (timing of hikes in and out)
- Know background of group members before crew is in the back country
- Managing the public's wilderness experience
- Selecting campsites and predicting long term impacts (LNT)









QUESTIONS?

