

Rocky Mountain National Park

Day Use Visitor Access Plan and Environmental Assessment
NoCo Partners Group January 2024



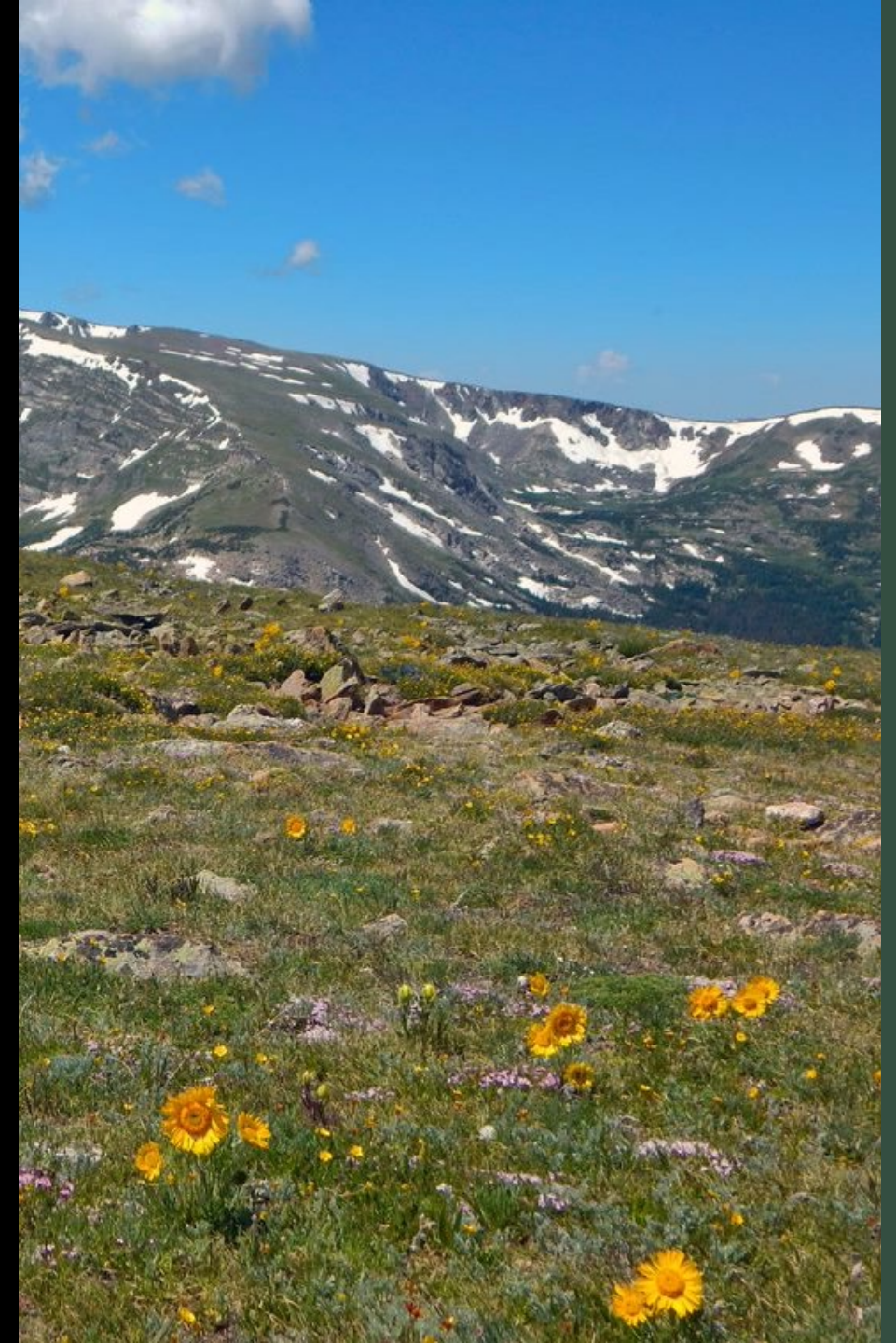
National Park Service Mission

Organic Act

..to conserve park resources and to provide for their use and enjoyment “in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

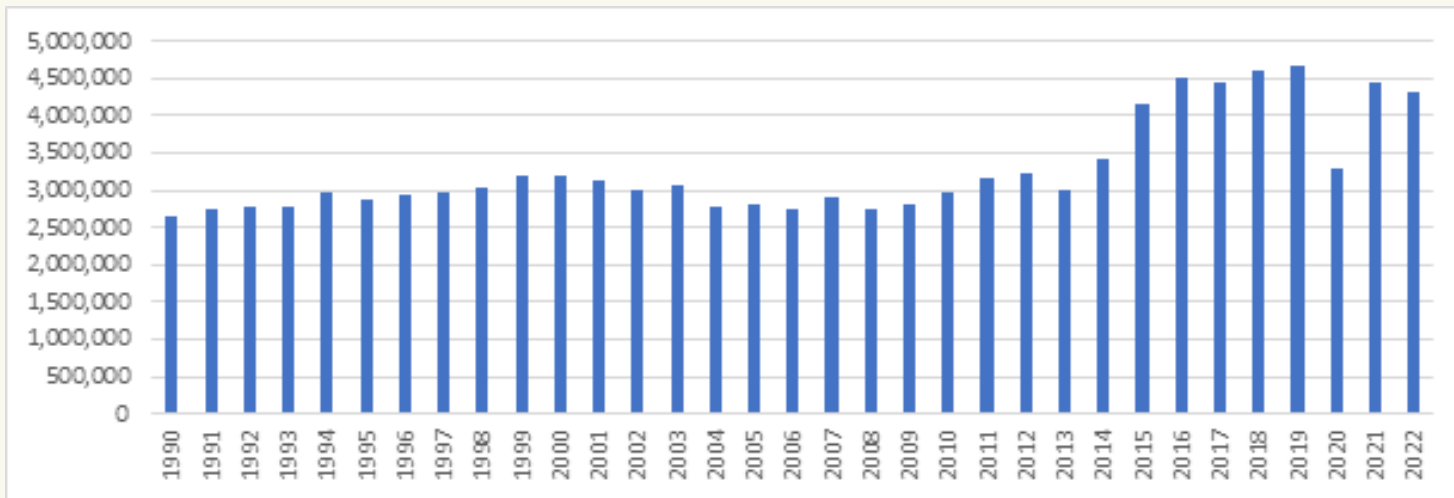
In 2009, 95 percent of Rocky Mountain National Park was designated as wilderness

“an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”



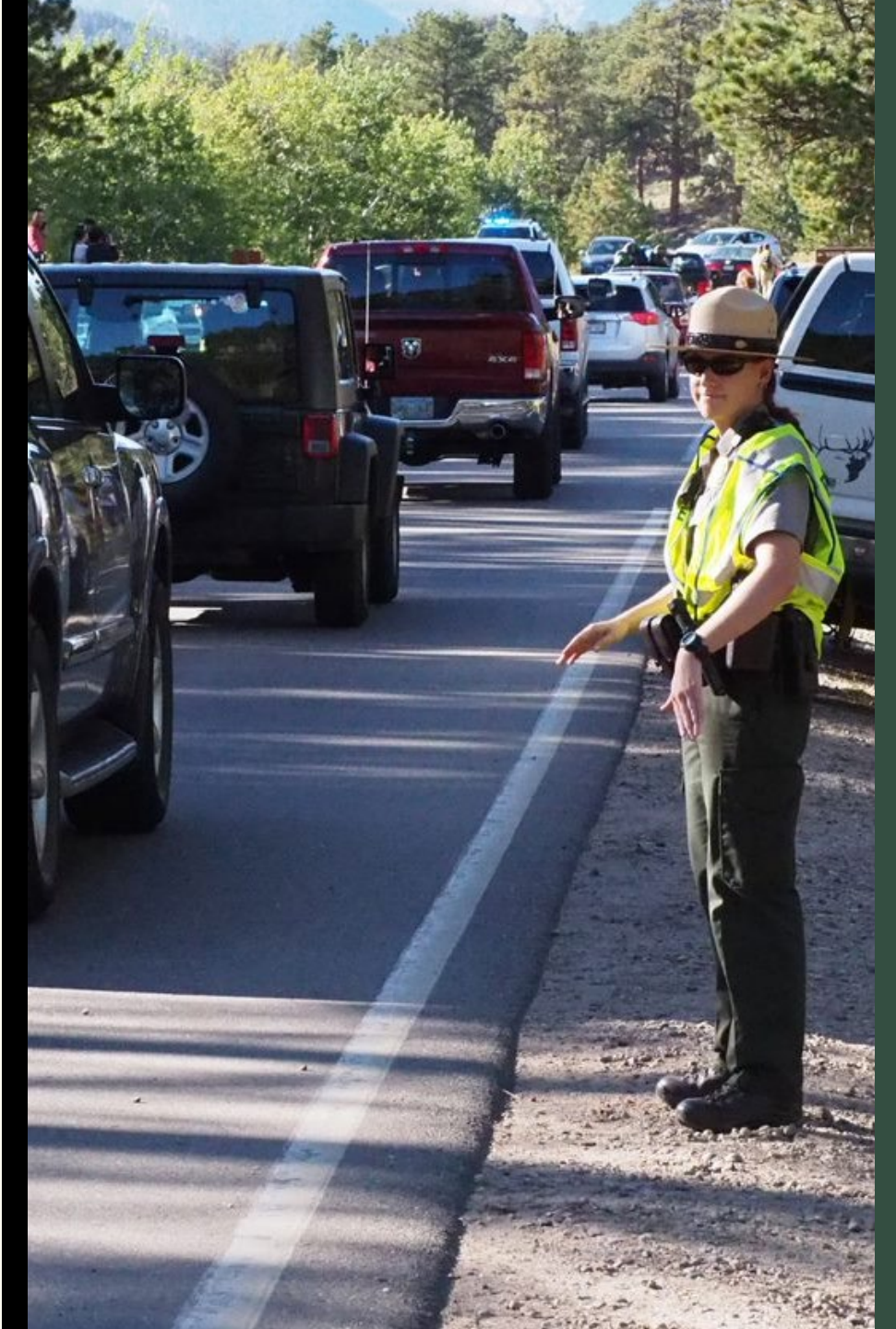
Purpose and Need for the Plan

- Protect and enhance the park's fundamental resources and values and achieve and maintain desired conditions
- Rapid growth in day use visitation starting in 2012
- 2019 was record visitation with 4.6 million visitors, a 44% increase since 2012



Primary Issues This Plan Addresses

- Natural and Cultural Resource Issues
- Visitor Experience Issues
- Staff and Visitor Safety Issues
- Facilities and Operations Issues



Visitor Use Management Framework



National Park Service VUM Objectives:

Enhance opportunities to connect visitors to the park's fundamental resources and values

Implement effective visitor use management to improve experiences and protect resources

Connect the evaluation of issues, opportunities, and implementation strategies



INTERAGENCY
VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL



Want to learn more?

Visitorusemanagement.nps.gov

Summary of Civic Engagement

Round 1: Issues and Values – Summer 2021

- *What issues most interfere with your desired park experiences? How can the park better protect resources for future generations?"*
- 60-day public comment period with virtual public meetings
- Comments were used to inform desired conditions, issues analysis, and strategy identification

Round 2: Strategies – Winter 2022/2023

- *Based on your desired experiences and protection of natural and cultural resources at Rocky Mountain National Park, which of the (or combination of ideas) do you think best achieve the purpose of the plan?*
- 51-day public comment period with a virtual public meeting and an open house in Estes Park, CO.
- Comments were used to inform alternatives in the Day Use Visitor Access Plan

Round 3: Day Use Visitor Access Plan and Environmental Assessment – Winter 2023/2024

- *We value your feedback on the proposed alternatives to ensure quality visitor experience in a way that preserves the natural, cultural, wilderness, and recreational resources and the environmental analysis of these alternatives.*
- 45-day public comment period with a virtual public meeting and open houses in Estes Park and Grand Lake.
- Comments will be used to finalize the Rocky Mountain Day Use Visitor Access Plan.

Public Comment

- Round 3 comments were focused on presented alternatives
- About 500 received with 200 of those form letters from organizations
- Comments focused on a variety of areas such as
 - Expanded shuttle use
 - Entrance station queuing
 - Commercial use
 - Data used to determine reservation allotments and time windows
 - Longs Peak Educational permit
 - Associated reservation fees
 - Local access and visit spontaneity

NoCo Partner Feedback/Thoughts

- Feedback and insights on the amount of public comment received?
- Ways to leverage Partners and others to make planning processes more accessible and engaging?
- How can Partners help educate and inform visitors?