

Los Padres National Forest ENVIRONMENTAL NEWSLETTER

May 1989

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER...

The purpose of the "Environmental Newsletter" is to encourage public input to ongoing environmental analyses and provide notification of completed analyses. It is intended to compliment normal public involvement efforts initiated by the Forest Supervisor or District Rangers for specific projects.

A typical analysis description in the Newsletter includes the name, brief description, and location of a project, and the responsible Forest Service office. A more detailed description is given for those analyses currently in the "scoping" phase; thereafter, reference to the analysis is followed by an abbreviated description and the date the project was first announced in the Newsletter. The Newsletter is organized by county and by categories which correspond to the environmental analysis process:

Environmental Analyses Being Scoped

This category includes analyses for which public input is being or is about to be solicited.

Environmental Analyses Completed

Under this heading you will find those analyses which have been "categorically excluded" from documentation in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement and which have culminated in the preparation of a "Decision Memo". The Decision Memo is a document in which a forest officer records his/her decision to exclude a proposed action from documentation in an EA or EIS. It is a new requirement under the recently revised administrative appeals process (36 CFR Part 217).

What is a "categorical exclusion"? The Secretary of Agriculture and the Chief of the Forest Service have established categories of actions which have been determined not to have a significant effect on the human environment and which are excluded from the preparation of an EA or EIS. Some of these actions require a Decision Memo, others do not. For example, routine administrative and maintenance actions such as road closures or the posting of signs; construction of low-impact facilities; or repair and maintenance of buildings or trails normally do not require a Decision Memo.

Categories of activities for which a Decision Memo must be prepared include, but are not limited to, low-impact silvicultural, range and pest management activities; mineral and energy activities of limited size, duration and degree of disturbance; fish and wildlife habitat improvement activities; and Small Tracts Act land transfers.

The Decision Memo includes: a description of the proposed action; the scoping process followed and the issues identified; the reasons for categorically excluding the proposed action; any findings required by other laws; the date when the responsible official intends to implement the decision; administrative review or appeal opportunities; a Forest Service contact; the responsible official's signature and date.

Future issues of the EA Newsletter will include projects for which a Decision Memo has been prepared, but will not include other "categorical exclusions". The projects described under "Environmental Analyses Completed" in this issue fall under the old appeals process. If you have any questions about the new appeals process or categorical exclusions, contact Forest Planning Officer Gerry Little in the Forest Supervisor's Office.

Environmental Analyses Documented

In this category are found recently completed EA's and Draft and Final EIS's.

Environmental Analyses in Progress

This category includes projects currently under study.

For further information regarding any of the projects included in this newsletter or for copies of documents, please contact the office indicated under the project description. Addresses and telephone numbers are listed at the end of the newsletter.

MONTEREY COUNTY

Environmental Analyses Being Scoped None.
Environmental Analyses Completed None.
Environmental Analyses Documented None.
Environmental Analyses In Progress None.

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Environmental Analyses Being Scoped
Cuesta and Tassajera Peak Electronic Sites. A site management plan is being developed to determine how these two existing electronic sites will be managed in the future, including site boundaries, administration of present facilities, and potential for future development. The sites are located on West Cuesta Ridge in T. 29 S., R. 12 E., Sections 29 and 35, M.D.M. A public meeting is scheduled for May 10, 1989 at 7:30 p.m. in the San Luis Obispo City-County Library Conference Room. The purpose of the meeting is to explain what a site management plan is, to review the planning process and proposed timeline, and to document the issues and concerns of meeting participants. Written comments should be submitted prior to May 25, 1989. Santa Lucia Ranger District.

Environmental Analyses Completed None.
Environmental Analyses Documented None.

Environmental Analyses in Progress
Buena Vista Mines Proposed Plan of Operations. Proposal to collect mineral samples near Pozo Summit using shallow (less than 50 feet) 3" drill holes. T. 30 S., R. 16 E., Sections 5 and 6, M.D.M. Santa Lucia Ranger District - March, 1989 Newsletter.

San Luis Obispo County Trails Master Plan. Analysis of opportunities for trail development in four zones covering all of the National Forest land in San Luis Obispo County. A separate EA will be prepared for each zone: West Cuesta, Central Area, Pozo/La Panza Area, Rockfront Area. Santa Lucia Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

OHV Route Rehabilitation Project. Evaluation of immediate needs for rehabilitation of four OHV routes in San Luis Obispo County (Friis Hill, Howards Hill, Mare Springs and Shaw Ridge). Santa Lucia Ranger District - March, 1989 Newsletter.

Navajo Prescribed Burn. Analysis to determine appropriate treatment for 1700 acres within the La Panza Fuel Management Block. T. 29 S., R. 16 E., Sections 20 and 21, M.D.M. Santa Lucia Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

AT&T Telephone Line. Proposal to place a new telephone cable underground on an existing right-of-way. T.29 S., R. 11 E., Sections 12 and 13, R. 12 E., Sections 6 and 7, M.D.M. Santa Lucia Ranger District - October, 1988 Newsletter.

Garcin Land Exchange. Proposal to consolidate land ownership by exchanging parcels of privately-owned land for nearby National Forest land in vicinity of Highway 166. T.12 N., R.30 and 31 W., S.B.B.M, T. 32 S., R.17 E., M.D.M. Santa Lucia Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Environmental Analyses Being Scoped
Falls Trail Reroute. The Falls Trail is located within the San Rafael Wilderness and provides access to the Sisquoc River from the vicinity of the Santa Cruz and Mission Pine Trails junction. As presently located, the trail encroaches on the Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary. It has not been maintained for several years in order to protect the integrity of the sanctuary. The analysis will address the feasibility of re-routing the existing Falls Trail, evaluate alternative locations for trail access, and determine the impacts of all alternatives on the Condor Recovery Program. The analysis is in the very preliminary stages, and a formal public scoping period has not yet been designated. T. 7 and 8 N., R. 27 W., S.B.B.M. Santa Lucia Ranger District.

Environmental Analyses Completed
Camuesa and Buckhorn Management Units Wildlife Habitat Improvement. A Categorical Exclusion has been completed for pre-burn crushing of selected areas of brush in the Camuesa and Buckhorn Vegetation Management Units. Santa Barbara Ranger District - December, 1988 Newsletter.

Environmental Analyses Documented None.

Environmental Analyses in Progress
DeVaul Canyon Horizontal Wells. Proposal for 1-4 horizontal wells near two springs in the east and west forks of DeVaul Canyon to increase available water to the permittee. T. 5 N., R 29 W., Section 4, S.B.B.M. Santa Barbara Ranger District - January, 1989 Newsletter.

Divide Peak OHV Proposal. Analysis of construction of a trail that would extend from Divide Peak to Juncal Campground and development of a small parking area between Romero Saddle and Juncal Campground. A letter explaining the status of the project was mailed recently to interested publics. Santa Barbara Ranger District.

Southern California Edison 66kv Line. Proposed power line from Glen Annie substation to Gaviota. Santa Barbara Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

Garcin Land Exchange. Proposal to consolidate land ownership by exchanging parcels of privately-owned land for nearby National Forest land in vicinity of Highway 166. Santa Lucia Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

Sisquoc Ranch Prescribed Burn. The proposed prescribed burn involves both private land and National Forest land. The expanded project includes 13,168 acres of private land and 1,386 acres of National Forest land, south of Manzanita Mountain. T. 9 N., R. 30 and 31 W., S.B.B.M. Santa Lucia Ranger District - March, 1989 Newsletter.

KERN COUNTY

Environmental Analyses Being Scoped

Ride and Tie Event. The District is considering a request to utilize forest roads and trails in the Cuddy Valley/Mount Pinos area for a "ride and tie" event. The competition would involve 100-150 teams of two people and one horse alternately riding and running a 36 mile course. T. 9 N., R. 20 and 21 W., T. 8 N., R. 20 and 21 W. Mount Pinos Ranger District.

Sand Canyon Shooting Closure. The District is conducting a study addressing a potential ban on discharging firearms on National Forest lands immediately north of Frazier Park. T. 9 N., R. 20 W., Sections 25 and 26, R. 19 W., Section 31, S.B.B.M. Mount Pinos Ranger District.

T.A.T. #4 Mining Claim. The District is evaluating a proposed exploration operation and associated road access for a placer mining claim west of Frazier Park. T. 9 N., R. 19 W., Section 32, S.B.B.M. Mount Pinos Ranger District.

Environmental Analyses Completed

O'Neil Canyon Road/Utility Line. A Categorical Exclusion has been completed for a road/utility line on an existing road to a private inholding. T. 9 N., R. 19 W., Section 29, S.B.B.M. Mount Pinos Ranger District - January, 1989 Newsletter.

Environmental Analyses in Progress

T.A.T Mining Claims/ALTA International. Proposed Plan of Operations for mining claims north of Frazier Park. T. 9 N., R. 19 W., Sections 29, 30, 31 and 32, S.B.B.M. This project has been suspended because the proponent has not displayed a continuing interest in it. Mount Pinos Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

Goldhill Enduro. Analysis of proposed motorcycle enduro in the Goldhill area. Mount Pinos Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

VENTURA COUNTY

Environmental Analyses Being Scoped

Pine Mountain Forest Management. Portions of the coniferous forest along the Pine Mountain Ridge from Pine Mountain Campground to Reyes Peak Campground are overstocked and infected by dwarf mistletoe. The District is proposing to thin selected stands and undertake a long term program of replanting. T. 6 N., R. 23 W., S.B.B.M. Ojai Ranger District.

Lions Campground Streambank Stabilization. Streambank erosion is threatening facilities at Lions Campground. The District proposes to continue the existing gabion southward along the eroding streambank. T. 6 N., R. 22. W., S.B.B.M. Ojai Ranger District.

Recreation Shooting Policy Review. The District is proposing to review existing shooting closures and patterns to recreational shooting to determine what if any changes should be made. The policy review will focus on the Highway 33 corridor but is Districtwide in scope. Ojai Ranger District.

Buck Creek Trail Reroute. The District is considering a reroute of two segments of Buck Creek Trail near Hardluck Campground. T. 7 N., R. 19 W., Sections 1, 2, 31, 30, 24, S.B.B.M. Mount Pinos Ranger District.

Smith Fork Fencing Project. Project would consist of fencing off approximately 65 acres of land currently used as an open area by OHV's from Hungry Valley. T. 7 N., R. 19 W., Section 11, S.B.B.M. Mount Pinos Ranger District.

Environmental Analyses Completed

Gravel Removal, Cuyama River. A Categorical Exclusion has been completed for Ventura County's proposal to remove gravel from the Cuyama River to place a cap layer on the Ozena Dump site. T. 7 N., R. 23 W., Section 21, S.B.B.M. Mount Pinos Ranger District.

Environmental Analyses Documented

Road Construction to Private Inholding. A Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact was signed March 30, 1989 approving construction of 0.6 miles of road from Reyes Creek/Scheideck Road (7N11) to a private inholding of property. Mount Pinos Ranger District. October 1988 Newsletter.

Environmental Analyses in Progress

Pratt Trailhead Design. Development and selection of a design alternative for the existing Pratt trailhead with a focus on providing more appropriate parking facilities. T. 4 N., R. 23 W. Ojai Ranger District - October, 1988 Newsletter.

Senior Canyon Debris Removal. This project has been terminated. Further analysis has revealed that the hazard, taken in context with its setting, does not warrant project work. Ojai Ranger District - October, 1988 Newsletter.

Lions Club Deaf Camp. Proposal to utilize approximately 4 acres of National Forest System Land for a portion of a "wilderness" camp for hearing-impaired children. West of Highway 33, south of Pine Mountain. T. 6N., R. 24W., Section 12, S.B.B.M. Ojai Ranger District - October, 1988 Newsletter.

Green Cabins Trail Proposal. Proposal to re-open access to the Green Cabins area. Ojai Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

Rose Valley Road Easement. Proposed easement for existing road extending from the Rose Valley Lower Lake to private land. Ojai Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

Dominguez Canyon/Agua Blanca Vicinity Fuels Management. Analysis of alternative fuels management strategies for wildlife benefits. Ojai Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

Casitas Watershed Fuel Management Block. Programmatic environmental analysis for vegetation management in Casitas watershed. Ojai Ranger District - March, 1988 Newsletter.

Last Environmental Newsletter issued: March, 1989.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICES

Los Padres National Forest

Arthur J. Carroll - Forest Supervisor
6144 Calle Real
Goleta, CA 93117
(805) 683-6711

Monterey Ranger District

Acting District Ranger
406 S. Mildred
King City, CA 93930
(408) 385-5434

Santa Lucia Ranger District

Keith Guenther - District Ranger
1616 N. Carlotti Drive
Santa Maria, CA 93454
(805) 925-9538

Santa Barbara Ranger District

Patrick Pontes - District Ranger
Star Route
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
(805) 967-3481

Ojai Ranger District

Ron Bassett - District Ranger
1190 E. Ojai Avenue
Ojai, CA 93023
(805) 646-4348

Mount Pinos Ranger District

Trinidad Juarez - District Ranger
Star Route, Box 400
Frazier Park, CA 93225
(805) 245-3731

If your address is not correct as shown on the envelope, or if you know anyone not currently on the list who would like to receive the Los Padres Environmental Newsletter, please let us know. Contact Kathy Good, Public Affairs Specialist, in the Office of the Forest Supervisor for any business concerning addresses or distribution of the Newsletter.