Los Padres National Forest

Schedule of Proposed Environmental Actions

Visit our website at: www.r5.fs.fed.us/lospadres

January - March, 2000

DEAR FRIEND...

The purpose of the "Schedule of Proposed Environmental Actions" is to provide you with an overview of environmental analyses currently in progress or recently completed in Los Padres National Forest pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). We hope that this information will help you become involved early in the decision-making process for those projects which might interest or affect you.

The Schedule is issued quarterly (January, April, July, October). Projects are listed by county and by the categories described below. Each description includes a brief explanation and location of the project, current status, the estimated decision date, and the name of the project leader.

For further information regarding specific projects, opportunities for participation, or the availability of documents, please contact the appropriate project leader at the Forest Service office listed under each project. For general information on the environmental analysis process, contact NEPA Coordinator, Jim Turner, in the Forest Supervisor's Office. For all other matters regarding the Schedule, contact Kathy Good in the Public Affairs Office.

Analyses Being Scoped

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

Analyses Completed

This category includes projects which have been "categorically excluded" from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and which have culminated in the preparation of a Decision Memo (DM) as required by Chapter 31.3, FSH 1909.15.

Analyses Documented

This category addresses recently completed EA's and EIS's for which a Decision Notice (DN) has been issued.

Analyses in Progress

This section includes projects currently under analysis.

FORESTWIDE

Analyses Being Scoped None.

Analyses in Progress

Oil and Gas Leasing Analysis. Forestwide environmental analysis to identify lands which should or should not be made available for oil and gas leasing. The decisions made as a result of this analysis will not result in on-the-ground activities. Any exploration, drilling or field development which might be proposed following the forestwide study would require further environmental analysis and separate site-specific decisions. A Draft EIS is expected in Winter 2000. Contact: Al Hess, Team Leader, Ojai Ranger District.

MONTEREY COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped None.

Analyses Completed None.

Analyses Documented

Control of Invasive Weeds on the Big Sur Coast. Proposal to treat non-native invasive weeds at twelve sites (approximately 36 acres) on the Big Sur Coast with herbicides. The method of application will be by low pressure apparatus, spraying herbicides directly on target plants. Estimated decision date: March 2000. Contact: Jeff Kwasny, Resource Officer, MRD.

Analyses in Progress

Coast Highway Management Plan (CHMP). The CHMP is a two-phase effort: Phase 1 relates to storm damage activities and Phase 2 is a more comprehensive planning effort that addresses corridor management on a larger scale. The Phase 1 effort is intended to develop interagency agreements and facilitate storm damage response for future years including consideration of potential material disposal sites, on and off National Forest System lands. Environmental analyses will be conducted on each potential site before any decision is made to permit their use as material deposit sites. Contact: Jeff Kwasny, Resource Officer, MRD.

Monterey Institute for Research in Astronomy (MIRA). Proposal to modify the existing MIRA Special Use Permit to incorporate a Small Telescope Facility (observatory, computer and storage buildings) within the existing site plan. T.19S., R.4E., Section 6, MDB&M. Estimated decision date: June 2000. Contact: William Metz, Recreation Officer, MRD.

Big Sur Coastal Grazing Permits. Authorization of livestock grazing on the following eight grazing areas/ allotments: Gorda, Twitchell, Buckeye, Alder Creek, Salmon Creek, Torre Canyon, San Carpoforo and other recently acquired National Forest System lands. This analysis will be used in the decision-making process to authorize or not authorize grazing, and if authorized, to what extent. Estimated decision date: April 2000. Contact: Jeff Kwasny, Resource Officer, MRD.

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped

American Tower Additions to Communications Facility at Tassajera Peak Site. Public scoping will begin in the spring of 2000 for an analysis of a proposal by American Tower to add a new tower at an existing site (formerly owned by AT&T) at the Tassajera Peak Communications Site, T.29S., R.12E., Section 20, MDM. Estimated decision date: unknown. Contact: Dennis Cooper, Lands and Minerals Officer, SLRD.

Morro Creek Allotment. Proposal to analyze grazing on the Morro Creek Allotment for permit re-issuance. Proposal includes two permittees with on-off permits. The number of cattle using the Forest Service portion of the allotment would total about 10 head. T.29S., R.11E., Sections 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, MDM. Estimated decision date: late January 2000. Contact: Melody Fountain, Resource Officer, SLRD.

Coast Highway Management Plan (CHMP). The CHMP is a two-phase effort: Phase 1 relates to storm damage activities and Phase 2 is a more comprehensive planning effort that addresses corridor management on a larger scale. The Phase 1 effort is intended to develop interagency agreements and facilitate storm damage response for future years including consideration of potential material disposal sites, on and off National Forest System lands. Environmental analyses will be conducted on each potential site before any decision is made to permit their use as material deposit sites. Contact: Jeff Kwasny, Resource Officer, MRD.

Analyses Completed — None.

Analyses Documented — None.

Analyses in Progress

San Carpoforo Grazing Permit. Authorization of livestock grazing on the San Carpoforo allotment and other recently acquired National Forest System lands. This analysis will be used in the decision-making process to authorize or not authorize grazing, and if authorized, to what extent. Estimated decision date: April 2000. Contact: Jeff Kwasny, Resource Officer, MRD.

Cerro Alto Trail Reroute. Proposal to reroute a steep 1000 foot section of the trail to avoid continued trail erosion. The project will consist of brush removal and establishing a new trail tread. Trail grade will be approximately 6% to 7%. T.29S., R.11E., Section 12, MDB&M. Contact: Manuel Madrigal, Recreation Officer, SLRD.

Integrated Vegetation Management for PG&E Line. Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) is proposing to use a combination of mechanical methods and herbicides to control woody vegetation along the powerline access road, transmission towers and isolated locations beneath sections of their 500kv Diablo-Midway powerline that passes through a small section of the SLRD. T.31S. R.17E., Sections 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28 & 32, MDM. The EA will analyze the site specific effects on the environment by the proposed treatments. Estimated decision date: Winter 2000. Contact: Dennis Cooper, Lands and Minerals Officer, SLRD.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped

Winchester Gun Club. Public scoping will begin in Winter 2000 for an analysis on the Winchester Gun Club special use permit renewal. T.5N., R.28W., Sections 18 & 19; T.5N., R.29W., Sections 13 & 14, SBBM. Estimated decision date: unknown. Contact: Marian Kadota, Lands Officer, SBRD.

Santa Ynez River Ford. Public scoping will begin in January regarding a proposal to reconstruct the ford located just past the county-maintained Paradise Road on the Forest Service-maintained river road, adjacent to the Lower Oso Day Use Area. The ford was partially demolished by El Nino storms and has since been shored up with gravel to allow recreationists access to the Lower Santa Ynez Recreation Area. The proposed action is to reconstruct the ford and relocate it slightly (approximately 150 feet) upstream in order to reduce the length (and cost) of the river crossing and improve public safety by increasing sight distance. T.5N., R.28W., Section 2, SBBM. Estimated decision date: Winter-Spring 2000. Contact: Jeff Bensen, Recreation Forester, SBRD.

Analyses Completed

Diablo Prescribed Burn. A decision has been made to use management ignited prescribed fire to treat approximately 6,000 acres of standing chaparral south of Hildreth Peak and north of Gibraltar Reservoir, in the Agua Caliente subwatershed, T.5N., R26W., Section 1; T.5N., R.25W., Sections 2-6; T6N., R.25W., Sections 13-30; T.6N., R26W., Sections 13, 24, 25, 35 and 36, SBBM. The project is expected to be undertaken in February 2000. Contact: Carol Henson, Fuels Officer, SBRD.

Analyses Documented — None.

Analyses in Progress

Broadcast Peak Communications Site Plan. This proposal would delineate site boundaries, determine the kinds of uses appropriate to the site, and identify areas for potential development. The plan would also address the technical specifications and management requirements for existing and new facilities that might be constructed. T.5N., R.29W., Section 7, SBBM. The pre-decisional EA should be out for a 30 day public comment period in mid-January 2000. Estimated decision date: Winter 2000. Contact: Marian Kadota, Lands Officer, SBRD.

Riverside/White Rock Recreation Facilities. Proposal to construct recreation and interpretive facilities along Paradise Road in the Manzanita and Cabin Lane areas, and west of the White Rock Picnic Area, in the Lower Santa Ynez Recreation Area. T.5N., R.28W., Section 3, SBBM. Estimated decision date: Winter 2000. Contact: Jeff Bensen, Recreation Forester, SBRD.

Happy Canyon Allotment. Proposal to analyze grazing on the Happy Canyon Allotment on the Santa Barbara Ranger District. Includes 73 cow/calf pairs and 3 bulls from March 1 to February 28. T.7N., R.29W., SBBM. Estimated decision date: Spring 2000. Contact: Gary Montgomery, Range Specialist, SLRD.

De Vaul, Durbiano, Venadito SUP for Livestock Area. Proposal to analyze grazing on three small special use pastures in order to re-issue grazing permits. Includes DeVaul for 10 yearling cattle from March 1 to July 30; Durbiano for 5 horses from January 1

to December 31; and Venadito for 5 cow/calf pairs from February 15 to June 30. Estimated decision date: Spring 2000. Contact: Gary Montgomery, Range Specialist, SLRD.

KERN COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped

Reforestation of Condor Burn. Proposal to reforest approximately 40 acres of Jeffrey pine/white fir forest type that burned in the summer of 1998. The project is on Mount Abel in T.9N., R22W, SW1/4 of Section 23, SBBM. The project is expected to be completed in two phases: the first planting of conifers will be in the spring of 2000, and the second will be in the spring of 2001. Scoping will begin in January and the Decision Memo is expected to be signed in March 2000. Contact John Kelly, Forester, MPRD.

Kern County Land Exchange. Proposal to conduct a land exchange with Kern County. The Forest Service would exchange approximately 10 acres of National Forest System lands located in the Frazier Park area, and 10 acres of land adjacent to Camp Condor, in exchange for approximately 90 acres of land in the Camp Condor area which is currently owned by Kern County. The land which is being exchanged is currently occupied by the Kern County Fire Station #57, adminstrative buildings and two old burn dumps. Scoping was initiated in October 1999. The project is categorically excluded from documentation. The project file will be completed by February 2000. T.9N., R20W., Sections 26 and 35, and T.9N., R.22W., Sections 22 and 23, SBBM. Contact: Mark Bethke, District Ranger, MPRD.

Analyses Completed None.
Analyses Documented None.

Analyses in Progress

Special Use Permit for Organization Camp. Proposal to renew a Special Use Permit to continue operating an existing year-round organizational camp on national forest system land located due west of the community of Pinyon Pines at the base of the northeast flank of Mt. Pinos. The site is currently occupied by the El Camino Pines/Frontier Pines Camp and is located along Frontier Road, 1/2 mile southwest of the intersection of Mount Pinos Highway and Mil Potrero Highway. T.9N., R.21W., Section 26. The applicant proposes to upgrade the facility to make the camp fully accessible to individuals who are physically challenged through minor modifications to existing buildings. A limited number of new buildings would be constructed and some existing structures would be relocated to more clustered locations. The applicant proposes to increase the capacity of the camp from approximately 140 people to approximately 200 people. Estimated decision date: unknown. Contact: Loreigh Brannan, Special Uses Administrator, MPRD.

VENTURA COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped

Gold Hill OHV Trail. Proposal to construct an off-highway vehicle trail to provide an alternate OHV route between the Hungry Valley State Vehicular Recreation Area and the MPRD's east-side OHV trail system. T.7N., R.19W., Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 18, SBBM. Objective is to remove OHV use on Gold Hill Road to improve public safety while maintaining existing recreation opportunities. Approximately 5 miles of trail would be constructed. Estimated decision date: Spring 2000. Contact: Don Trammell, Recreation Officer, MPRD.

Analyses Completed None.
Analyses Documented None.

Analyses in Progress

Sisar Allotment. Proposal to analyze allotment on the Ojai District for permit re-issuance. Proposal includes 6 cow/calf pairs. Staff members are addressing public comments and finalizing the EA. A Decision Notice is expected in Spring 2000. Contact: Gary Montgomery, Range Specialist, SLRD.

Rice/Wills Allotment. Proposal to analyze allotment on the Ojai District for permit re-issuance. Proposal includes 16 cow/calf pairs. Staff members are addressing public comments and finalizing the EA. A Decision Notice is expected in Spring 2000. Contact: Gary Montgomery, Range Specialist, SLRD.

Sisar II Prescribed Burn. Proposal to conduct a 275 acre prescribed burn project in cooperation with the Ventura County Fire Department, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and Ventura County Air Pollution Control District. The Sisar II project is an extension of several prescribed burn projects in the Ojai frontcountry, including the Fairview/Foothill and Shelf burns which are being implemented this year, and the Sisar I burn which was implemented last fall. The project is located on the east side of Sisar Creek and the west side of Bear Creek in T.4N., R.22W., Section 1, and T.4N., R.21W., Section 6, SBBM. The purpose of the project is to lower the risk of large destructive wildfire hazards by reducing fuel loading and removing brush in the urban interface to increase defensible space. A combination of pile and broadcast burning will be accomplished with the use of hand-carried drip torches, a terra-torch, and a heli-torch. The objective is to remove 60% of the standing fuels in a manner resembling a low to medium intensity, naturally occuring backing fire. Contact: Diane Cross, Fuels Planner, ORD.

Sespe Fire Management Plan. Proposal to develop a fire management plan for Forest lands within the Sespe Watershed. The plan would allow prescribed natural fire (lightning) to fulfill its natural ecological role, define management-ignited prescribed burn units, and allow for control, contain and confine fire tactics to be implemented within the watershed. Estimated decision date: unknown. Contact: Diane Cross, Fuels Planner, ORD.

Ojai Valley Gun Club. Proposal to renew the existing special use permit for the club's facilities in Rose Valley. T.5N., R.22W., Section 4, SBBM. Estimated decision date: unknown. Contact: Charlie Robinson, Recreation Officer, ORD.

Piru Creek Mining Activities. An EIS to determine whether to approve Plans of Operation for mining activities along Piru Creek from Pyramid Lake to Lockwood Flats including but not limited to dredging, panning, sluicing, and high banking. Resources potentially affected include archeological sites, water quality and four sensitive wildlife species. Piru Creek is presently being studied for Wild and Scenic River nomination. Estimated release of draft EIS: Winter 2000. Contact: Mike Foster, Resources Officer, MPRD.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS

Los Padres National Forest (SO)
Jeanine Derby - Forest Supervisor
or Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor
6144 Calle Real, Goleta CA 93117
(805) 683-6711

Monterey District (MRD)
Will Metz - Acting District Ranger
406 S. Mildred, King City, CA 93930
(831) 385-5434

Santa Lucia District (SLRD)
Acting District Ranger
1616 N. Carlotti Drive, Santa Maria, CA 93454
(805) 925-9538

Santa Barbara District (SBRD)
Gloria Silva - District Ranger
3505 Paradise Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93105
(805) 967-3481

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

Mount Pinos District (MPRD)
Mark Bethke - District Ranger
34580 Lockwood Valley Road, Frazier Park, CA 93225
(661) 245-3731

The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250, or call 202- 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Note: With our October 1999 newsletter we included an announcement from Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck regarding an opportunity for public review and comment on the "proposed rule for managing land and resources" on the 155 National Forests and National Grasslands. **The comment period has been extended 30 days to February 3, 2000**. Comments may be sent to: Planning Regulations, PO Box 7669, Missoula, MT 59807, or faxed to (406) 329-3021. Send e-mail comments to planreg/wo_caet@fs.fed.us. For further information, visit the Forest Service Washington Office website at http://www.fs.fed.us/forum/nepa/rule, or call Jim Turner or Kathy Good in the Los Padres Forest Supervisor's Office.