



Los Padres National Forest

Schedule of Proposed Environmental Actions

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October-December, 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 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 analysis and separate site-specific decisions. A Draft EIS is expected in Winter 2001. Contact: Al Hess, Team Leader, Ojai Ranger District.

MONTEREY COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped

South Coast Ridge Road Timber Stand Improvement. Proposal to cut the brush around seedlings and saplings on 40 acres along the South Coast Ridge Road. Estimated decision date: Spring 2001. Contact: John Kelly, Forester, MPRD.

Outback Adventures Outfitter/Guide SUP. Proposal to conduct guided backpacking and rock climbing courses on National Forest System lands within the Ventana Wilderness. Estimated decision date: August 2001. Contact Manuel Madrigal, Recreation Officer, MRD.

Hunting Guide and Outfitter/Guide SUP. Proposal to conduct guided hunting trips using stock and camping equipment on National Forest System Lands within the Ventana and Silver Peak wilderness areas. Estimated decision date: September 2001. Contact Manuel Madrigal, Recreation Officer, MRD.

Analyses Completed

None.

Analyses Documented

Control of Invasive Weeds on the Big Sur Coast. Proposal to treat with herbicides non-native invasive weeds at

twelve sites (approximately 36 acres) on the Big Sur Coast. The method of application will be low pressure spraying directly on target plants. Estimated decision date: October 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. T19S, R4E, Sec 6, MDB&M. Estimated decision date: June 2001. Contact: William Metz, Acting District Ranger, 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: Winter 2001. Contact: Jeff Kwasny, Resource Officer, MRD.

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped

Brookshire Prescribed Burn. Proposal to use management ignited prescribed fire to treat approximately 18,000 acres of standing chaparral vegetation to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire by reducing the fuel loading, and to restore watershed health. The project boundary lies to the east of Tepusquet Canyon along the national forest boundary, south of Madre peak, north of Barrel Springs Campground, and will run on the west side of the Sierra Madre Ridge Road from Madre Peak to Miranda Pines Campground in the Sisquoc and Cuyama watersheds. T23N, R18E, Sec 31, 32; T11N, R17E, Sec 4-10, 16-21, 29, 30; T11N, R18E, Sec 6; T12N, R17E, Sec 36; T11N, R17E, Sec 1, 11-15, 22-36; T10N, R17E, Sec 1-12, 14-18, 20-22, 27, 28, SBBM. Public scoping will begin in January 2001. Estimated decision date: June 2001. Contact: Carol Henson, Forest Fuels Officer, SBRD.

Navajo Flat Toilet Replacement. Proposal to replace the toilet in the Navajo Flat Off-Highway Vehicle Staging

Area. The existing facility has deteriorated and will be replaced with an accessible toilet design. Replacement of the facility will improve sanitation and accessibility for the site. Estimated decision date: October 31, 2000. Project implementation date is proposed for fiscal year 2003. Contact: Gina Thompson, Recreation Officer, SLRD.

Cerro Alto Trail Reroute. Proposal to reroute a steep 1,000 foot section of the trail to reduce soil erosion. The project includes brush removal and establishing new trail tread. The trail will be rerouted to a grade of approximately 6% to 7%. The Cerro Alto Trail is located in T29S, R11E, Sec 12, MDB&M. Estimated decision date: October 31, 2000. Project implementation date is proposed for fiscal year 2001. Contact: Gina Thompson, Recreation Officer, SLRD.

San Lorenzo Mining Claims. Proposed operating plan submitted by miner. Proposal is for a placer (creek) mining operation in the North Fork of Willow Creek. T30S, R16E, Sec 1&2, MDM. Estimated decision date: November 2000. Contact: Dennis Cooper, Lands and Minerals Officer, SLRD.

Analyses Completed **None.**

Analyses Documented **None.**

Analyses in Progress

American Tower Additions to Communications Facility at Tassajera Peak Site. Proposal by American Tower to add a new tower at an existing site (formerly owned by AT&T) at the Tassajera Peak Communications Site, T29S, R12E, Sec 20, MDM. Estimated decision date: unknown. Contact: Dennis Cooper, Lands and Minerals 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.

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: Winter 2001. Contact: Jeff Kwasny, Resource Officer, MRD.

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. T31S, R17E, Sec 22-24, 26-28 & 32, MDM. The EA will analyze the site specific effects on the environment by the proposed treatments. Estimated decision date: December 2000. Contact: Dennis Cooper, Lands and Minerals Officer, SLRD.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped

Manzana Trail Reconstruction. Proposal to complete reconstruction on a 12 mile long section of the Manzanita Trail from Nira Campground to South Fork Station in the San Rafael Wilderness. Deferred maintenance and winter storms have caused severe damage to sections of the trail. Trail reconstruction work includes reestablishing tread in heavily eroded sections, removing large rocks, drilling and pinning steps, reestablishing waterbars (drainage), reestablishing stone water crossings, repairing switchbacks, and replace and adding retaining walls. Estimated decision date: October 31, 2000. Project implementation date is proposed for fiscal year 2003. Contact: Gina Thompson, Recreation Officer, SLRD.

White Oaks Fire Station Decommissioning. Proposal to decommission and remove the White Oaks Fire Station on the Santa Lucia Ranger District. The facility has not been used since the 1970's and is no longer needed by the Forest Service. Due to decades of non-use, the facilities have deteriorated structurally and have become a health and safety hazard. Estimated decision date: October 31, 2000. Project implementation date is proposed for fiscal year 2003. Contact: Melody Fountain, Resource Officer, SLRD.

Figueroa Mountain Timber Stand Improvement. Proposal to cut the brush around seedlings and saplings on 60 acres on the East Pinery Plantation and Catway Road areas. Estimated decision date: Spring 2001. Contact: John Kelly, Forester, MPRD.

Winchester Gun Club. Public scoping is scheduled to begin in Winter 2000/2001 for an analysis of the Winchester Gun Club special use permit renewal. T5N, R28W, Sec 18 & 19; T5N, R29W, Sec 13 & 14, SBBM. Estimated decision date: unknown. Contact: Marian Kadota, Lands/Resource Officer, SBRD.

Analyses Completed

McMenemy Connector Trail. Proposal to construct a 0.75-mile hiking trail to connect the McMenemy Trail and an existing SC Edison catway providing a needed trail loop opportunity. T4N, R26W, Sec 5, SBBM. Estimated decision date: Fall 2000. Contact: Kerry Kellogg, Trails Manager, SBRD.

USGS GPS Reference Station Special Use Permit. In a decision memo signed on September 1, 2000, Forest

Supervisor Jeanine Derby approved a proposal by the U.S. Geological Survey to construct, use and maintain seven global positioning seismic reference stations. Sites include Chuchupate Ranger Station, Ozena Fire Station, Ventucopa Work Center (all MPRD); Rose Valley Work Center and Sisar Communication Site (both ORD); West La Cumbre Communication Site (SBRD); and Figueroa Station (SLRD). Each site will contain the following: a multi-legged device with each leg extending thirty feet into the ground; a pole that will contain support equipment; and a solar panel to power all the equipment. A core-drilling rig will be used to excavate the hole for each leg of the device. The device will be no higher than seven feet tall and measure approximately seven feet in diameter. The support pole will be constructed as close as possible to the device. Contact: Loreigh Brannan, Project Coordinator, MPRD.

Analyses Documented Analyses in Progress

None.

NACO West Outfitter/Guide SUP. Proposal to renew the special use permit for NACO West to conduct two and four hour guided horseback trail rides on Aliso/Lower Oso/Upper Oso Trail loop, Arroyo Burro Trail, and Arroyo Burro Road, Mateus and River Trail loop. Estimated decision date: December 2000. Contact: Jeff Bensen, Recreation Officer, SBRD.

Santa Ynez River Ford. 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. T5N, R28W, Sec 2, SBBM. The 30-day comment period for the Environmental Assessment is closed and the estimated decision date is November 2000. Contact: Marian Kadota, Lands/Resource 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. T5N, R28W, Sec 3, SBBM. Estimated decision date: Winter/Spring 2001. 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. T7N, R29W, SBBM. Estimated decision date: Winter 2001. Contact: Gary Montgomery, Range Specialist, SLRD.

De Vault, Durbiano, Venadito SUP for Livestock Area.

Proposal to analyze grazing on three small special use pastures in order to re-issue grazing permits. Includes DeVault 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: Winter 2001. Contact: Gary Montgomery, Range Specialist, SLRD.

KERN COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped

Pine Mountain Club Dwarf Mistletoe Suppression Treatment. Proposal to treat Jeffrey pine stands infected with dwarf mistletoe adjacent to Pine Mountain Club, and assist Pine Mountain Club Property Owners Association in suppressing and stopping the spread of the disease. Estimated decision date: Spring 2001. Contact: John Kelly, Forester, MPRD.

Pacific Bell Cable Replacement. Proposal by Pacific Bell to replace existing phone lines with digital cable lines across approximately seven miles of National Forest System lands along Cuddy Valley Road and Mil Potrero Road. Project would involve trenching, in the existing road prism where possible. Estimated decision date: December 2000. Contact: Mark Bethke, MPRD.

Analyses Completed

None

Analyses Documented

Mil Potrero Plantation Burn Project. On September 21, 2000, District Ranger Mark Bethke signed a Decision Memo approving the Mil Potrero Burn Project. The project involves a low intensity burn targeting 40 acres of basin sage and rabbitbrush while protecting the trees.

Analyses in Progress

Special Use Permit for Organization Camp. Proposal to renew a Special Use Permit to continue operating a year-round organizational camp on national forest system land 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, 0.5 mile southwest of the intersection of Mt. Pinos Highway and Mil Potrero Highway. T9N, R21W, Sec 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.

Kern County Land Exchange. Proposal to exchange approximately 10 acres of National Forest lands in the Frazier Park area, and 10 acres of land adjacent to Camp Condor, for approximately 90 acres of Kern County

property near Camp Condor. The land being exchanged is currently occupied by County Fire Station #57, administrative buildings and two old burn dumps. T9N, R20W, Sec 26 and 35, and T9N, R22W, Sec 22 and 23, SBBM. Mark Bethke, District Ranger, MPRD.

VENTURA COUNTY

Analyses Being Scoped

Rose Valley Environmental Education Center. Proposal to reissue a special use permit for approximately 5 acres facility in Rose Valley, off Highway 33, 12 miles north of Ojai. The decision will permit the use of the government owned facility at Rose Valley to a private or non-profit organization which can best contribute to the recreational and educational character of the area. The permitted area is approximately 5 acres of the existing facility; including buildings, fences, infrastructure and associated facilities excluding the large warehouse and associated acreage. The most recent use of the facility was by Ventura County Sheriff's Honor Camp and the Ojai Valley Youth C.R.E.W. A formal Request for Proposals will be distributed. Proposals considered may include but are not limited to: environmental education including wilderness values and endangered species and habitats, outdoor natural laboratory, local and regional school field trips, extended stays on site for education, outfitter guide trips to local areas, university type research, demonstration site for alternative electrical use at the facility, maintenance of adjacent campgrounds and/or additional camping on site plus retail facilities for local recreations will be considered. Selection of the proponent will be based on the proposals ability to make a positive contribution to the recreational and environmental education character of Rose Valley and the greater Ojai and Ventura areas. Public comment period is open until November 17, 2000. Estimated decision date: December 2000. Contact: John Bridgwater, District Ranger, ORD.

Alamo Mountain Prescribed Burn Project. Proposal to use prescribed fire to treat chaparral stands and forest floor fuels on the west slope of Alamo Mountain. The proposal is to use a variety of methods including hand carried drip torches and a helicopter to ignite the dead fuels and live standing brush on approximately 3,200 acres within a 4,840-acre block of land in the Piru Creek watershed. The project area is approximately 10 miles south southwest of Frazier Park and about 3 miles southwest of Gold Hill Campground. The proposed time frame for conducting the burn is in the fall or early winter of 2000, 2001 or 2002 (no burning would occur in the late winter or spring in order to protect breeding birds). Estimated decision date: October 2000. Contact: Mike Foster, Resources Officer, MPRD.

Rice-Wills Prescribed Burn. Proposal to conduct a 1700 acre prescribed burn project in cooperation with Ventura County Fire Department, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District. The project is located north of

Rancho Matilija and south of Wills Canyon in T4N, R23W, Sec 5-7, SBBM. Approximately 300 acres are on National Forest land and approximately 1500 acres are on private land. The purpose of the project is to use prescribed fire to lower the risk of large destructive wildfire by reducing fuel loading. It is an extension of ongoing cooperative projects in the Ojai front country. A combination of pile and broadcast burning will be utilized using hand-carried drip torches, terratorches and a heli-torch. The objective is to remove 60-70% of the standing fuels in a manner resembling a low to medium intensity, naturally occurring backing fire. Public scoping will begin in October 2000. Estimated decision date: June 2001. Contact: Diane Cross, Fuels Planner, ORD.

Laguna Prescribed Burn. Proposal to conduct a 1500 acre prescribed burn project in cooperation with Ventura County Fire Department, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District. The project is located west of Lake Casitas and south of Laguna Ridge in T4N, R24W, Sec 27-28, SBBM. Approximately 300 acres are on National Forest land and approximately 1200 acres are on private land. The purpose of the project is to use prescribed fire to lower the risk of large destructive wildfire by reducing fuel loading. It is an extension of ongoing cooperative projects in the Ojai front country. A combination of pile and broadcast burning will be utilized using hand-carried drip torches, terratorches and a heli-torch. The objective is to remove 60-70% of the standing fuels in a manner resembling a low to medium intensity, naturally occurring backing fire. Public scoping will begin in October 2000. Estimated decision date: June 2001. Contact: Diane Cross, Fuels Planner, ORD.

Analyses Completed

USGS GPS Reference Station Special Use Permit. In a decision memo signed on September 1, 2000, Forest Supervisor Jeanine Derby approved a proposal by the U.S. Geological Survey to construct, use and maintain seven global positioning seismic reference stations. Proposed sites include Chuchupate Ranger Station, Ozena Fire Station, Ventucopa Work Center (all MPRD); Rose Valley Work Center and Sisar Communication Site (both ORD); West La Cumbre Communication Site (SBRD); and Figueroa Station (SLRD). Each site will contain the following: a multi-legged device with each leg extending thirty feet into the ground; a pole that will contain support equipment; and a solar panel to power all the equipment. A core-drilling rig will be used to excavate the hole for each leg of the device. The device will be no higher than seven feet tall and measure approximately seven feet in diameter. The support pole will be constructed as close as possible to the device. Contact: Loreigh Brannan, Project Coordinator, MPRD.

Analyses Documented

None.

Analyses in Progress

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 eastside OHV trail system. T7N, R19W, Sec 4-8 and 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: Winter 2001. Contact: Don Trammell, Recreation Officer, MPRD.

Rice/Wills Allotment. Proposal to analyze the allotment 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 Winter 2001. Contact: Gary Montgomery, Range Specialist, SLRD.

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. T5N, R22W, Sec 4, SBBM. Estimated decision date: unknown. Contact: Charlie Robinson, Recreation Officer, ORD.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS

Los Padres National Forest (SO)

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Note: In 2001, we will begin the process of revising the Land and Resource Management Plans (Forest Plans) for the four national forests in southern California: the Cleveland, San Bernardino, Angeles and Los Padres. We look forward to working with you on this very important project. Be watching for further information sometime around the first of the year.