



File Code: 2720**Date:** August 9, 2016**Subject:** Los Pinos Conservation Camp Prospective New Tenant

Dear Interested Party,

The Cleveland National Forest (CNF) is planning to issue a special use authorization under the Granger-Thye authority for the occupancy and use of government-owned facilities and lands at the Los Pinos Conservation Camp to the California Conservation Corps (CCC). Under this authorization the CCC would operate and maintain the improvements as an Education Center for the maximum allowable term. Located on the Trabuco Ranger District of the CNF just above Lake Elsinore, CA, the Los Pinos Conservation Camp was constructed by the Forest Service as a Job Corps Conservation Camp in 1961, and was in operation as a work center from 1965 to 1969. The Camp was then occupied by the Orange County Department of Corrections from 1970 to 2016, and operated as a minimum security juvenile detention center between 1970 and 2009. The proposed CCC residential program is similar to the original intent and purpose of the Camp, and would be an excellent use of the facilities. Before making a final decision, I would like to share information about this prospective new tenant with you, and request your input.

The CCC is a State of California department that employs young men and women, ages 18-25, and up to age 29 for military veterans. The department provides them with opportunities to complete public service conservation work projects and to advance their education and training at residential and non-residential locations throughout the state. The CCC has partnered with the United States Forest Service (USFS) and other federal land management agencies since its inception in 1976. The department has a proven relationship with the USFS, which is exemplified by a history of completed project work and training partnerships with National Forests throughout the state.

CCC corpsmembers serve one to three years in the Corps, completing projects that range from building trails and brushing fire roads to completing energy surveys and retrofits. The department also assists state and federal agencies by responding to natural disasters including floods and wildfires. During the 2015/2016 fiscal year, the CCC completed more than 7.9 million dollars' worth of work statewide, which equated to over 400,000 hours doing fire and fuel hazard reduction, trail construction and rehabilitation, fencing, and much more.

In addition to core trainings completed by all corpsmembers, the CCC offers numerous training and educational opportunities to help corpsmembers become successful beyond the Corps, such as personal growth, life skills, work maturity, technical skills, leadership, financial literacy and higher education. All corpsmembers who do not have their high school diploma, are required to attend on-site classes with a partner charter school for at least 10 hours per week, outside of work. Corpsmembers with a high school diploma are also required to advance their education. Many CCC districts work with local community colleges to develop courses and standards for technical and academic training, such as Wilderness First Aid or becoming an EMT. These



partnerships help ensure the education and training offerings meet academic standards for excellence. If you would like to learn more about the California Conservation Corps, visit their official website at: www.ccc.ca.gov.

The CCC is in year two of a 5-year residential expansion strategy and has long sought to expand their residential capacity in the Riverside and San Diego Region. Currently the Camarillo Center (Ventura County) is the southernmost residential site, leaving a critical void in the greater southern California region, which represents more than 21 million people (Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and San Diego Counties). The addition of the Los Pinos Conservation Camp to the CCC residential program will begin to address this need.

Upon approval, the Los Pinos Conservation Camp would become home to a year-round residential training program, housing 4-6 newly established conservation crews of 10-15 young people (60-80 corpsmembers and up to 16 staff). Three of the crews would be trained by Cal Fire in wildland fire suppression, and the others would focus on sponsored resource work on public and private lands throughout southern California. All crews would participate in resource work, and the non-fire suppression conservation crews would also be available for emergency response, as is required of all CCC crews.

The issuance of this special use authorization to a new holder is administrative, and therefore categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement (EIS) or an environmental assessment (EA) (36 CFR 220.6(e)(15)).

Please let us know of your support, or concern, by sending comments with any issues that you think need to be addressed or any thoughts you have concerning our approach. Comments should be received prior to **September 30, 2016**, and may be emailed to comments-cleveland@fs.fed.us; mailed or hand-delivered during business hours (M-F 8:00 am to 4:30 pm) to: Forest Supervisor William Metz, Attn: Amy L. Reid, Cleveland National Forest, 10845 Rancho Bernardo Rd. #200, San Diego, CA 92127; or submitted by FAX to (858) 673-6192.

If you have any questions, please contact the Special Uses Permit Administrator, Amy L. Reid, at 858-673-6180.

Thank you for your interest in the Cleveland National Forest.


WILLIAM METZ
Forest Supervisor