



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Stanislaus National Forest
Summit Ranger District

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Dear Permit Holder:

This letter is to update you on the permit re-authorization process for the recreation residences (cabins) on the Stanislaus National Forest. In 2003, I was assigned by the Forest Supervisor as the line officer representative for this project covering 752 recreation residences located on the Groveland District (20), the Calaveras District (93), and the Summit District (639). Julie Martin, Summit Public Services Program Area Leader, was assigned as the overall Project Leader and the Interdisciplinary Team Leader for the environmental analysis portion.

As you are aware, there are three elements that must be completed prior to issuing new permits. To provide you with a better understanding of the process, these elements are described below:

1. **Consistency Review (CR):** The consistency review assesses current management and conditions of the recreation residence tracts to determine if the program is consistent with the management practices, direction, standards, and guidelines in the 1991 Stanislaus National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (as amended).

Status: The consistency review was completed and approved January 24, 2004. The continuation of the recreation residence program on the Stanislaus National Forest is consistent with Forest Plan Direction.

2. **Continuation Determination (CD):** This portion of the process provides an environmental analysis for all recreation residence tracts on the Stanislaus National Forest.

Status: Resource specialists (botany, archaeology, wildlife, soils/hydrology, road engineer) have completed field surveys of the tracts. Most resource concerns are being addressed through the compliance process. Specific proposals to address any remaining resource concerns are being drafted at this time. Efforts have been delayed due to limitations in available resources for this effort.

3. **Special Use Permit Compliance:** The remaining requirement of the reauthorization process is for recreation residence special use permit holders to be in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the Special Use Permit (SUP) as stated in Forest Service Manual 2721.23(c); Forest Service Handbook 2709.11, 41.23(3); and SUP Section III, Clause A, and Section IV, Clause A. A permit holder must be in compliance prior to issuance of a new term permit.

Status: From 2003 through 2005 compliance review inspections were completed on all 752 lots. These reviews were accomplished by Forest personnel and consisted of a minimum of two individuals to ensure consistency and neutrality.

Inspection Results Letters (Compliance letters) began to be issued in 2005 and issuance of these letters is currently continuing. Each letter requires a thorough review of files, documentation and inspection results to determine what, if any, corrections may be required. Because staffing with the



appropriate skills and expertise for this effort is limited, progress has been slow. As of the date of this letter, approximately 610 letters have been sent and there are 150 remaining.

With the issuance of the compliance letters a fourth workload was generated. This requires follow-up discussions, meetings and often site visits to resolve questions, consider new information, adjust timelines, identify alternative solutions and/or make adjustments to the original direction. A significant backlog of follow-up needs currently exists. I recognize your frustrations and thank you sincerely for your patience in this area.

The last step of the process will involve the actual preparation of 752 new permits. Each permit will need to be signed by the permit holder and the Forest Service prior to January 1, 2009.

Based on the above, it is apparent that a significant workload remains to be accomplished prior to the expiration on December 31, 2008 of the existing permits. To meet this requirement the Forest is implementing the following strategy.

- 1) Julie Martin and I are being exclusively assigned to this project for the next 4 months. Replacements will be brought in to relieve us of our normal workloads. The following priorities were established.
 - a) Completion of the remaining inspection result (Compliance) letters. (March through May)
 - b) Once all letters have been sent, shift to responding to follow-up requests: calls, meetings, site visits, etc. (May through July)
 - c) Review/approve compliance related requests (e.g. deck reconstructions, re-roofs, improvement modifications, etc.)
 - d) Finalize proposed actions for environmental analysis, release for review/comment (June/July/Aug)
- 2) Begin final inspections (June 07 until snow, then continue in 2008)
- 3) Final inspection result notifications (2007-2008)
- 4) Permit preparation (2008)

Donna Grosz, Regional Office Special Uses Specialist, will be temporarily assigned to the Summit Ranger District as the Acting District Ranger. Carol Hallacy, Asst. Recreation Officer from the Hume Lake Ranger District, Sequoia National Forest, will be temporarily assigned to the Summit Ranger District as the Acting Public Services Program Area Leader. Both Carol and Donna will arrive on March 19. Julie and I will return to our normal duties in mid-July.

In addition, Lettie Shindelar has been temporarily assigned into the Special Uses Permit program to assist in keeping basic actions and communications moving. Lettie is handling phone inquiries, transfers, paint approvals, and immediate health and safety needs. She is the first point of contact for all special uses needs including permit re-authorization inquiries. She can be reached at 209-965-3434, ext. 5337. The position vacated by Sue Morgan (Special Uses Permit Administrator) is currently being advertised. We hope to have it filled within the next 60 to 90 days.

I want to thank you all for your wonderful cooperation and patience as we work our way through this process. If you are interested in volunteering to assist us in this and/or other activities please see the enclosed flyer.

Sincerely,

KAREN JO CALDWELL
District Ranger/Project Manager