



**U.S. Forest Service
Inyo National Forest
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News Release

May 19, 2015
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Inyo National Forest Shares Results of Wilderness Evaluation

The Inyo National Forest announces an open house to share the results of the wilderness evaluation process as part of the completion of forest plan revision.

The informal open house will be Tuesday, June 9, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 p.m. at the US Forest Service Supervisors Office, 351 Pacu Lane, Bishop, CA 93514. Interested parties can stop by and talk to staff and view maps.

There will be a brief presentation to help explain the process the US Forest Service used. This meeting is informational and there is no comment period associated with it.

“I made a commitment to my communities that I would share the results of the wilderness evaluation with them prior to the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)” said Ed Armenta Forest Supervisor. “I am proud of the work of my staff to meet the intent of the evaluation. We neither advocated for or against wilderness, rather we simply evaluated which lands meet the criteria for proposed wilderness.”

The 2012 Planning Rule requires forests to identify and evaluate lands that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) and rivers suitable for inclusion under Wild and Scenic River Act (WSRA). The Sierra, Sequoia and Inyo national forests were selected as early adopters; they will be the first forests to revise their land management plans using the 2012 National Forest System Planning Rule. The planning rule provides the framework for Forest Service land management plans across the nation.

Staff will share the status of the Wild and Scenic River evaluation that is currently being reviewed by the planning team. If the review is complete, those results will be shared at the open house as well.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) decision document of the revised forest plans will describe any recommendations for wilderness.

Congress holds the authority to designate wilderness. If areas are recommended for wilderness, the responsible official will include forest plan direction to protect ecological and social characteristics so that the wilderness character of the recommended area(s) is not reduced before congressional action on the recommendation can take place.

There will be an opportunity for formal comment when the DEIS is released. The Forest Service expects to publish a “Notice of Availability of DEIS” in the fall 2015, which begins a 90-day public comment period.

More detail on the wilderness evaluation process can be found [here](#). Additional information regarding these forest plan revisions is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/r5earlyadopters>.