

CHAPTER 2 CONTENTS

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PUBLIC ISSUES AND MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

In 1979 and 1980, the Forest identified issues and concerns through scoping and Forest staff suggestions. Additional issues and concerns were raised in late 1990 and early 1991 following the withdrawal of the 1987 Draft Land and Resource Management Plan. The issues used in the 1993 DEIS and Draft Plan were reviewed and added to in response to public comments. These public issues and management concerns fall under the general term “issues”. The process of seeking, receiving, and developing these issues is described in Appendix A of the FEIS. How each of the 38 issues is answered in each of the management alternatives is shown in Table II-12 of the FEIS. This Chapter summarizes how the 38 issues are answered by this Plan (the preferred alternative from the FEIS).

DRIVING ISSUES

Issue 1. In its broadest sense this issue asks “How will the Forest maintain biodiversity or viable populations of all native and desirable non-native plant and animal species?” How the Forest will manage habitat to maintain viable populations of northern spotted owls, marbled murrelets and other threatened, endangered, candidate or sensitive wildlife species dependent on mature and old-growth forests provides the focal point for this issue. Issues 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 22, 32, and 34 are all components of this same issue.

Resolution: The Forest has responded to this issue through the following strategies:

- (1) The Forest will be managed to maintain ecosystem components, structure and processes. Both reserved and matrix areas perform an important role in maintaining biodiversity. Forests in the matrix function as connectivity between reserved areas and provide habitat for a variety of organisms associated with both late-successional and younger forests. Matrix lands will be managed to simulate natural disturbance regimes, and to provide for important ecological functions such as dispersal of organisms, carryover of some species from one stand to the next, and retention of late-successional and old-growth ecosystem components. The matrix will also add ecological diversity by providing early successional habitat.
- (2) To ensure that late-successional and old-growth vegetation is retained in stands large enough to provide functional habitat and in a well distributed pattern across the landscape, two management areas have been designated; the Managed Habitat and Special Habitat Management Areas. These areas are connected by riparian reserves that provide dispersal habitat for species.
- (3) New standards and guidelines have been created to ensure that management direction is implemented to achieve the Plan’s goals for maintaining viable populations of plants and animals. For example, standards and guidelines for vegetation management now provide explicit implementation standards for retaining a combination of live green trees, hardwoods, snags and down woody material at regeneration to contribute to future habitat and ecosystem function. Standards and guidelines to survey and manage for a number of species will improve our understanding of the lesser-known species and

their niche in forest ecosystems. See Chapter 4 of this Plan for specific standards and guidelines.

Issue 2. What level of annual timber harvest will the Forest make available to help provide for the economic base of local communities?

Resolution: The annual level is determined by two factors; the amount of productive land available for timber management and how these acres are subsequently managed. During the past forty years, timber harvesting has been designed to extract the highest value timber at the lowest overall cost while maintaining water quality and soil productivity. Techniques and effectiveness in achieving these goals have steadily improved over time. It was believed that the large areas not available for timber management would provide all the mature and old-growth habitat necessary to maintain dependent wildlife and plant species. As more was learned, however, large areas of the Forest were shifted to a habitat emphasis and out of their previous timber emphasis. This occurred because by relying primarily on economic criteria to extract timber, harvesting has greatly reduced the amount and size of stands of mature and old-growth timber. This process has resulted in a threat to maintaining viable populations of mature and old-growth dependent species.

This Plan seeks provide a sustainable, predictable long-term timber supply for local economies. The proposed allowable sale quantity from matrix lands and the Hayfork Adaptive Management Area is 15.5 MMBF for the first decade, and could increase to 16.5 MMBF by the fifth decade.

The first decade level of harvest (15.5 MMBF) will directly and indirectly provide 174 timber jobs annually. In addition, timber harvest will return \$1.4 million to counties for roads and schools and an estimated \$159,800 in yield tax to the state on an annual basis.

Issue 3. How will the Forest manage riparian zones to help reverse the apparent decline in the yield of anadromous fisheries, and to maintain or restore the ecological processes and functions of riparian ecosystems?

Resolution: The Forest management strategy includes a four-part aquatic conservation strategy that designates riparian reserves along streams and waterbodies, establishes ten key watersheds within five of the six major river systems on the Forest, requires a watershed analysis prior to management in specific watersheds, and targets watershed restoration to restore watershed health and aquatic ecosystems. This four-part strategy is designed to maintain and restore the productivity and resiliency of riparian and aquatic ecosystems.

Interim riparian reserve widths are designated for streams, and waterbodies; final reserve width will be designated after a watershed analysis is complete and project-level analysis are performed. The interim riparian reserve widths are based on the height of site potential trees, and vary from two site-potential tree heights (or 300 feet slope distance) per side for fish-bearing streams and around lakes and ponds to one site-potential tree height (or 150 foot slope distance) per side for intermittent streams and around constructed ponds, reservoirs, and wetlands greater than one acre. There will be no regulated timber harvest within riparian reserves, and there are a number of other standards and guidelines for management within these reserves. See Chapter 4 of this Plan for more information riparian reserves.

Approximately 70 percent of the Forest, will be within nine designated key watersheds for anadromous fisheries. The purpose of these key watersheds is to provide habitat essential to the health of identified fish stocks, to aid in the recovery of at-risk fish stocks, and to maintain or restore the aquatic biodiversity of the riparian ecosystem.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

GEOLOGY

Issue 4. Will management activities accelerate geologic instability, and thereby degrade water quality?

Resolution: Ninety percent of unstable areas occur adjacent to streams. All unstable areas adjacent to streams and Riparian Reserves along perennial and intermittent streams have been withdrawn from

regulated timber harvest. Outside of Riparian Reserves, proposed activities will be designed to ensure water quality maintenance. This may include avoidance of unstable areas, or implementation of site-specific mitigation measures which effectively reduce risk to an acceptable level.

SOILS

Issue 5. How will soil productivity be maintained on logged areas?

Resolution: The Forest has implemented soil quality standards, which address prevention of soil compaction, soil erosion, maintenance of organic matter and monitoring the soil resource, to ensure maintenance of soil productivity. These standards are applied site specifically through the interdisciplinary process used during project design.

WATER

Issue 6. How will adverse cumulative effects on water quality be prevented?

Resolution: Standards and guidelines relating to soils, water, riparian reserves and fisheries as well as management activities such as timber harvesting and fuels management will mitigate the effects on watersheds. Watershed restoration programs will also mitigate effects. Regional cumulative effects methodologies will be utilized in conjunction with landscape level and site-specific analyses to design projects that prevent off-site effects.

BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Issue 7. How will vegetative diversity be maintained Forest-wide?

Resolution: Forest standards and guidelines require adequate vegetation and ecological diversity conditions to support wildlife, scenic quality and other needs. Matrix lands will be managed to maintain a

distribution of vegetation types and seral stages that is within a subset of the historical range of variability and to provide high levels of diversity elements such as snags, hardwoods and downed woody material. Significant examples of major vegetation types will be maintained in Research Natural Areas.

Issue 8. How will “old-growth” be preserved?

Resolution: Approximately 91 percent of the Forest will be allocated to uses that exclude most land disturbance and timber management activities. Old-growth forests in these areas will remain undisturbed and will continue their current trends and rates of successional change. The remaining 9 percent of the landbase will be managed for both timber and other commodities and will also provide some habitat for mature and old-growth dependent wildlife species.

SENSITIVE PLANT SPECIES

Issue 9. How will sensitive plant populations be managed?

Resolution: Site-specific analysis and a biological evaluation will be completed on all land-disturbing activities to ensure sensitive plant populations are not jeopardized. Avoidance will be the most common mitigation. In uncommon situations where maximum protection through avoidance is not an option, measures to reduce adverse impacts will be employed or, if the mitigations are not believed to be effective, the project will be discontinued.

WILDLIFE

Issue 10. How will Forest Plan land allocations and their respective management prescriptions affect wildlife?

Resolution: The Forest has established a network of designated habitat areas, with specific direction, to protect essential habitat of selected threatened, endangered and sensitive species. The Forest has developed special silvicultural prescriptions and standards and guidelines that are intended to maintain specific habitat components, both in Managed Habitat Areas and the General Forest, and contribute to viable population maintenance. The Forest has identified 33 management indicator species that will be monitored

to determine the effectiveness of habitat area direction and the standards and guidelines. Research will be conducted on selected wildlife species to assess response to different management activities and intensities and to ensure mitigation measures are adequate.

Issue 11. How should wildlife habitats on the Forest be managed?

Resolution: The Forest has developed management area direction and associated standards and guidelines to protect or maintain special wildlife habitat components and mitigate adverse effects on essential habitat. The Forest will validate species-specific habitat capability models, which characterize essential components of habitat quality, quantity and spatial distribution. The Forest will monitor project implementation and determine the effectiveness of the existing direction, and standards and guidelines. Research will be conducted on selected wildlife species to determine their life requirements in managed forests.

Issue 12. How has the ecological corridor concept been treated on the Forest?

Resolution: Riparian Reserves will provide the core for travel and ecological corridors throughout the Forest. The need for additional corridors would be assessed as part of the landscape analysis process. If needed, additional corridors would be identified and would be managed using silvicultural strategy 5. See the Managed Habitat Management Area direction for more information.

RIPARIAN AREAS

See Issue 3 under “Driving Issues.”

FISHERIES

Issue 13. How will the Forest maintain or improve the quality and quantity of spawning and rearing habitat?

Resolution: Spawning and rearing habitat will be maintained and restored through the attainment of the aquatic conservation strategy objectives. The designation of riparian reserves and key watersheds, as well as the requirement for watershed restoration, will contribute to achieving those objectives. See Issue 3 for more information.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

See Issues 1 and 2 under “Driving Issues,” Issue 17 under “Heritage Resource Management,” and Issue 36 under “Special Forest Products Management.”

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

See Issue 2 under “Driving Issues.”

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS

Issue 14. What areas will be recommended for establishment as Research Natural Areas?

Resolution: There are eight Research Natural Areas allocated in the Forest Plan; these areas are described in Chapter 3 of the FEIS. These areas are withdrawn from the regulated timber base, and will be managed for the maintenance of unmodified conditions and natural ecological processes.

SPECIAL INTEREST AREAS

Issue 15. How will special interest areas be protected?

Resolution: The Forest has identified a total of seven botanical, ecological, cultural, and geological special interest areas. These areas are withdrawn from the regulated timber land base, and will be managed to maintain their unique values.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Issue 16. How will the Forest reduce the hazard to forest users created by the illegal use of Forest land for marijuana cultivation?

Resolution: Forest law enforcement officials will continue to cooperate with the various State and County law enforcement agencies to prevent and eradicate illegal use of National Forest lands.

HERITAGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Issue 17. What constitutes reasonable protection of Indian cultural activities and values?

Resolution: All proposed activities require an assessment of potential impacts to cultural resources, including contemporary use. For project-related activities, important heritage resource properties will be identified, evaluated, and protected. Inventories will be conducted to meet the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act. The local Indian population will be contacted to assist in developing measures to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects to cultural values and traditional uses.

TRANSPORTATION AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Issue 18. Has the Forest considered stopping new road construction and/or decommissioning existing roads?

Resolution: The Forest will construct some new roads (2.5 miles annually) during the next two decades; however, most new roads and some existing roads are planned to be closed. In addition, the Forest will decommission approximately 25 miles of road annually through watershed restoration and other programs. Overall, the miles of open road on the Forest will be reduced.

Issue 19. Has the Forest designated existing and future utility corridors?

Resolution: Three existing utility corridors identified in the Western Regional Corridor Study (1992) are designated as utility corridors in this Plan.

FIRE AND FUELS MANAGEMENT

Issue 20. How should the Forest manage fire to protect and improve resources?

Resolution: Aggressive suppression of wildfires will continue on the Forest. The most effective fuels management program will be used to achieve hazard reduction and resource management objectives. Fuels treatment may be appropriate in areas where natural fuels buildup poses a threat to human safety or capital investments. Low intensity prescribed burning and treatment alternatives which leave more woody debris for wildlife habitat will be emphasized. Fuels treatment will be used in parts of the forest where fire is a natural part of the ecosystem. Opportunities to improve other resources (wildlife habitat, Native American gathering areas) through the use of fire will be explored. The use of fuel treatment and the methods permitted will vary by management area.

MINERALS MANAGEMENT

Issue 21. How will the effects of mining be managed?

Resolution: Wilderness, the Smith River National Recreation Area, and Wild River Management Areas are currently legislatively withdrawn from future mineral entry and development, subject to valid existing rights. Additional management areas may be recommended for administrative withdrawal from mineral entry. Mineral development and exploration may occur elsewhere on the Forest, subject to approved operating plans, which include requirements for reclamation, and protection of the surface resources.

RANGE MANAGEMENT

Issue 22. How should the Forest manage the range resource?

Resolution: Management direction includes the improvement of the ecological condition of the range resource while providing for existing grazing use. It is expected that the demand for Forest rangelands will remain at current levels.

RECREATION

Issue 23. How much of the Forest will be opened to off-highway vehicles?

Resolution: There are no areas of the Forest that are proposed for unrestricted OHV use. All OHV use will be on designated routes.

Issue 24. How many miles of trails will be constructed and maintained on the Forest?

Resolution: Approximately 16 miles of trails would be constructed or reconstructed on the Forest over the next decade to bring the total on the Forest to 284 miles of trails. Maintenance will occur on the newly constructed trails and on the existing trails at a rate of 95 miles a year; trails would be maintained every three years.

Issue 25. How will more recreational opportunities be provided?

Resolution: Major facility construction would occur within the Smith River National Recreation Area, as indicated in the NRA Management Plan. Minor site construction would occur elsewhere on the Forest. Trails management would expand to include consideration for equestrian and mountain bike use.

ROADLESS AND WILDERNESS AREAS

Issue 26. How should released Roadless areas (RARE II) be managed?

Resolution: The 1984 California Wilderness Act allowed for non-wilderness, multiple-use management of roadless areas. The ten remaining identified roadless areas on the Forest have been allocated to various non-wilderness management areas; approximately 95 percent of these areas would be within management areas that would retain or only slightly alter their wilderness attributes. Those roadless areas in key watersheds would have no new road construction. Refer to Chapter 4 of the FEIS for the specific allocation of each roadless area.

Issue 27. How will wilderness be managed?

Resolution: Wilderness areas will be managed to maintain and protect wilderness qualities. The Shasta-Trinity National Forest is presently developing a wilderness plan for the Trinity Alps Wilderness, which should be available in the spring of 1995. Programmatic direction for the Siskiyou, North Fork, and Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness areas is included in Chapter 4 of this Plan. This direction will be supplemented by wilderness implementation schedules for these individual wildernesses.

Issue 28. Should the Forest establish additional areas for wilderness management?

Resolution: Current and projected wilderness use on the Forest is below maximum projected demand. In order to better meet multiple-use objectives and provide a spectrum of recreational opportunities on the Forest, no additional areas are recommended for wilderness management. Approximately 95 percent of the remaining roadless areas will be managed in a manner that would retain or only slightly alter their wilderness attributes.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

Issue 29. Will other rivers be assessed for inclusion in the national Wild and Scenic Rivers System?

Resolution: The Forest performed a Forest-wide eligibility study between the Draft and Final Plans; Appendix D of the FEIS contains the information from the study. The study concludes that of Forest's rivers, Blue Creek, Red Mountain Creek, and Redwood Creek were determined to have potential outstandingly remarkable values. Suitability studies for these river segments will be performed. The potential outstandingly remarkable values of these segments will be protected until the suitability studies are complete.

Issue 30. What will be the boundaries for the rivers in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System?

Resolution: Corridor widths for the wild and scenic rivers in the Smith River NRA were designated in the Smith River NRA Act. Corridor widths for the South Fork of the Trinity were designated in the South Fork of the Trinity Wild and Scenic River Management Plan. Recreational and scenic river corridors on the Klamath and Trinity Rivers follow the Riparian Reserve Management Area boundary, with adjustments for private lands and Small Tracts Act parcels. The wild river boundary for the North Fork

Eel is based on visual considerations, with exceptions for private land and wilderness.

TIMBER

Issue 31. How will hardwoods be utilized?

Resolution: Hardwoods will be managed as a desired component of the Forest ecosystem. Commercial and personal use of hardwoods removed to meet resource objectives will be encouraged.

TREES WITH SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATION

Issue 32. How will the Forest protect redwood trees?

Resolution: As specified in the National Recreation Area Management Plan, redwood stands, and individual redwood trees visible from scenic outlooks, will be protected. Isolated trees occurring in areas available for timber management could be harvested. Redwoods do not occur outside of the NRA on the Six Rivers National Forest (except in the Yurok Experimental Forest).

Issue 33. What plan does the Forest have to ensure the maintenance of Pacific yew?

Resolution: The demand for yew bark, which contains a chemical that is being used in cancer research, has increased dramatically. At the National level, the Department of Agriculture, the Office of General Counsel, and the National Cancer Institute are developing appropriate procedures to make the most effective use of available supplies of yew bark. When these procedures and guidelines are completed, they will be implemented. The harvest of products from individual yew trees is allowed, after site-specific analysis determines there would be no adverse effects to other resources, or to the continuance of yew as a local species.

Issue 34. Has the Forest developed a plan to control *Phytophthora lateralis* and to maintain Port-Orford-cedar?

Resolution: Strategies for reducing the risk of infection or spread of the disease will be integrated into all levels of planning and analysis for all areas that contain Port-Orford-cedar. A risk analysis will be completed for all projects in watersheds containing Port-Orford-cedar. The Forest is utilizing disease control strategies identified in the Region 5/Region 6 Port-Orford-cedar Action Plan, developed in 1988 to coordinate efforts to control the spread of Port-Orford-cedar root disease. The main areas of concern covered in the plan are 1) inventory and monitoring, 2) research, 3) public involvement and education, and 4) management policy. The plan is updated as new information is developed.

SPECIAL FOREST PRODUCTS

Issue 35. How will the Forest ensure the sustainability of special forest products while providing a source of income for local communities?

Resolution: The Forest has developed a set of standards and guidelines to ensure that special forest products are collected in a sustainable manner. See the Special Forest Products section of Chapter 4 for more information.

Issue 36. How will the Forest balance the utilization of special forest products among culturally diverse publics?

Resolution: Certain areas will be reserved for personal and traditional collection, and will be off-limits to commercial collection.

PESTS

Issue 37. Under what conditions should pesticides (herbicides) be used as a Forest management tool?

Resolution: The application of herbicides would be limited to situations where their use is essential to achieve the assigned land management objectives, and would be limited to hand application methods. All potential uses would be evaluated in a site-specific environmental analysis.

VISUAL QUALITY

Issue 38. How much Forest scenery will appear undisturbed?

Resolution: Visual quality objectives have been assigned to all Forest landscapes. Over time, the forest should appear less disturbed as the use of uneven-aged management replaces clearcutting.