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Forest Plan Revision Update

Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres, San Bernardino National Forests

NEW FOREST PLANS DONE!

The Forest Supervisors thank the public, look forward to collaborating on plan implementation

Thanks to the commitment and energy of thousands of forest stakeholders like you, we have now reached a significant milestone: the publication of the final Forest Plans for the Cleveland, San Bernardino, Angeles and Los Padres National Forests. Your involvement over the past four years, and your comments on the draft documents, have helped us craft better final Forest Plans.

Throughout this planning process, forest stakeholders have expressed a wide range of views on the access to, use, enjoyment and protection of national forest resources for present and future generations. The final plans place even greater emphasis on species conservation, also sustainable recreation through adaptive reuse of existing recreation facilities. The new plans emphasize the *condition of the land* rather than *outputs from the land*, a measurement that was characteristic of land management plans from the 1980’s.

Many of you expressed concerns about specific situations or proposals, especially regarding roads, trails and other developments. The Forest Plans don’t make decisions at the project level,

but will provide the strategic management direction to guide selection and design of site-specific projects.

We recognize that full implementation of the Forest Plans could require higher funding levels in some program areas. Forest managers will use the *strategic direction* contained in the plans to achieve objectives within the constraints of current budgets while making progress toward longer term *desired conditions*. We consider the Forest Plans to be “living documents” in that they can be updated and adjusted as needed based on the findings of our monitoring programs.

Implementation of the plans will require working collaboratively with individuals, communities, organizations, other agencies and tribal governments to monitor the effectiveness of the zoning and other direction and make changes where needed. We encourage you to work with your local forest managers on projects or monitoring efforts in your area.

To help introduce you to the new Forest Plans, we are hosting a series of open houses in communities near the forests (see page 15). We hope that you can join us, but the plans and associated materials will be widely available to you if you can’t make one of the meetings.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this important effort.



Forest Service releases new Forest Plans

New plans stress community wildfire protection, sustainable recreation, ecosystem health

The Regional Forester of the Pacific Southwest Region made the decision to select Alternative 4a from the choice of seven alternatives in the Southern California Forest Plan Revision Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). This decision affects the management of 3.5 million acres on the four national forests, which extend from the border with Mexico to Big Sur. The decision is subject to appeal within 90 days of the date of the legal notice.

Under the selected alternative, there will be continued em-

phasis on collaboration with the public on community protection plans. Fuels reduction work will focus on increasing the ability of firefighters to defend communities in the area where human development meets with an undeveloped vegetative setting, called the Wildland/Urban Interface. The Forests will also emphasize “sustainable recreation,” a term being used to describe the concept of providing high quality outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities that also promote long-term forest health. Finally, all management activities will be carried out with consideration to protecting the unique biological resources of southern California and improving forest health.

The Forest Service believes the selected alternative best addresses the issues and concerns raised by the public. The plans,

SEE Plans, page 5



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New Land Use Zones Approved

Zoning of areas addresses motorized access, special protection needs

The decision made on the Forest Plans approves the use of seven (for the Angeles, eight) land use zones. Each parcel of national forest land has a specific designated land use zone that determines the management emphasis for that area. These zones also determine the range of suitable uses and activities which are allowed in that area. The land use zones in the plans include:

Designated Wilderness (EW) – areas currently included in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Recommended Wilderness (RW) – areas recommended to Congress for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System. This is a preliminary administrative recommendation.

Critical Biological (CB) – areas where the most important habitat for the most threatened species can be protected.

As illustrated by the photo on the left, the BCMUR zone is managed for administrative motorized access only, while the BC zone is managed for public motorized access, as shown in the photo on the right. The management intent for all the Back Country zones is a low level of development.



An addition to the San Jacinto Wilderness (shown in photo) is recommended in the San Bernardino Forest Plan.

Back Country Non-Motorized (BCNM) – areas managed for non-motorized public access and recreation use. This zone in particular contributes to the need for ecological reserves and wildlife linkages. Construction of permanent roads is prevented but temporary roads may be used to do administrative work.

Back Country Motorized Use Restricted (BCMUR) – areas managed for non-motorized public access and recreation use, but where the important need for various kinds of administrative access on designated routes is accommodated (e.g. for community protection and general forest management purposes). Administrative access also accommodates access by other government agencies, tribal governments, special-use authorization holders and persons accessing their private land.

Back Country (BC) – areas managed for motorized public access and recreation use on designated National Forest System roads and trails. Motorized routes may be designated in the area.

Developed Area Interface (DAI) – areas on the periphery of the national forest where community development has occurred, or areas within the national forest where concentrated human use is occurring. Accordingly, much of the community defense work and fuels management activities in response to the National Fire Plan will be focused within this zone. The zone is also compatible with the location of sites needed for a variety of special-uses.

Experimental Forest (EF) – On the Angeles National Forest, the San Dimas Experimental Forest is separately zoned.

Changes in new plans

The public perception that there would be significant development and even off-road use allowed in the Back Country land use zone caused great concern with the Draft Plans. In response to comment, changes were made to clarify definitions and also management intent for the land use zones.

The new Forest Plans emphasize that motorized use is allowed only on designated roads and trails, and in limited designated areas on the Cleveland and Angeles National Forests. Cross country driving is not allowed on the Forests.

Management intent is that all of the Back Country zones (BCMUR, BCNM, BC)—even where public motorized use is suitable— remain largely undeveloped and natural appearing. To better describe this intent, the zone called “Back Country Motorized” in the Draft Plans is now called “Back Country.”

The most obvious zoning change between the Draft and Final Plans is that there are now fewer acres designated as Back Country and more in the BCMUR and BCNM zones. Mapping of the zoning has been fine tuned and now designates areas where the topography makes roads and trails infeasible as BCNM. Also, BCMUR zoning reflects where restricted motorized use historically occurred and the intent is to continue with that management.

In addition to responding to public comments, designation of zoning considered current and anticipated uses as well as the level and type of motorized access thought to be needed to meet management goals and objectives. The land use zoning allows for the connectivity of non-motorized trail systems such as the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. All existing designated OHV routes are in land use zones in which this use is suitable, and the zoning supports the potential linking of OHV routes or systems.

Two zones used in the Draft Plans (Urban Rural Interface and Developed Area Intermix) that had the same suitable uses were combined into one new zone called Developed Area Interface in the Final Plans.

Only strategic level allocation decisions are made in the new Forest Plans. No site-specific decisions are made, such as adding or removing trail or road system mileage. Table 1 shows the acres allocated to each land use zone in the new plans.

Table 1. Acreage allocated to each land use zone in the new Forest Plans.

Forest	DAI	BC	BCMUR	BCNM	CB	RW	EW	Forest Total *
ANF (acres)	85, 828	161, 392	52, 791	248, 399	3, 920	13, 231	81, 924	647, 485
ANF (%)	13%	25%	8%	38%	<1%	2%	13%	100%
CNF (acres)	43, 107	77, 064	50, 356	161, 320	2, 131	11, 377	75, 523	420, 878
CNF (%)	10%	18%	12%	38%	<1%	3%	18%	100%
LPNF (acres)	60, 150	332, 050	319, 884	171, 035	1, 762	35, 821	860, 678	1, 781, 380
LPNF (%)	3%	19%	18%	9%	<1%	2%	48%	100%
SBNF (acres)	59, 408	169, 786	37, 553	239, 936	2, 281	26, 428	130, 362	665, 754
SBNF (%)	9%	25%	5%	36%	<1%	4%	20%	100%
Total (acres)	248, 493	740, 292	460, 584	820, 690	10, 094	86, 857	1, 148, 487	3, 515, 497
Total (%)	7%	21%	13%	23%	<1%	3%	32%	100%

* does not include 15,495 acres in San Dimas Experimental Forest, within ANF boundary.

Wild and Scenic River Study Findings

The Forest Service is recommending to Congress that three more rivers on the Los Padres National Forest be added to the National Wild and Scenic River System, while on the other three Forests about 240 miles of rivers will be managed to retain their Wild and Scenic River eligibility

All four Forests completed the first (eligibility) phase of the Wild and Scenic River (WSR) study process. To be eligible, a river must be free-flowing and have at least one “outstandingly remarkable” river value such as recreation, scenery, fish, wildlife, botany, geology or heritage resources. The Forests also reviewed the current level of development and determined the highest potential classification (wild, scenic, or recreational) of each eligible river segment. Twenty rivers (in part or total) on the San Bernardino, Cleveland, and Angeles National Forests were identified as eligible for wild and scenic status. Results of the inventories are shown in Table 2. (Los Padres information is shown in a separate table because rivers found to be eligible on that Forest were further studied to determine if they were suitable to be recommended to Congress as a Wild and Scenic River.) Under the new Forest Plans, eligible rivers will be managed to protect the free-flowing character, potential classification, and outstandingly remarkable values of eligible rivers until a suitability study (including public involvement) is completed at a later date and recommendation to Congress regarding river designation is made.

Table 2. Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers									
Cleveland National Forest					San Bernardino National Forest				
Name	Eligible miles	Classification *			Name	Eligible miles	Classification *		
		W	S	R			W	S	R
Cottonwood Ck.	11.9			11.9	Lytle Ck.	2.4		2.4	
San Luis Rey	3.4			3.4	Whitewater R.	25.6	25.6		
San Mateo Ck.	15.3	15.3			Bear Ck.	8.9		8.9	
Total	30.6	15.3	0.0	15.3	Deep Ck.	19.7	9.0	10.7	
Angeles National Forest					Fish Ck.	3.6	3.6		
Name	Eligible miles	Classification *			Holcomb Ck.	15.1	5.8		9.3
		W	S	R	Santa Ana R.	19.8	2.4	3.5	13.9
Little Rock Ck.	18.4		15.8	2.6	Siberia Ck.	3.0		3.0	
Piru Ck. **	3.7			3.7	Bautista Ck.	13.4			13.4
San Francisco Ck.	13.0			13.0	Fuller Mill Ck.	3.4			3.4
San Antonio Ck.	3.6			3.6	Palm Canyon	8.1	8.1		
San Gabriel R.	35.9	8.4		11.5	San Jacinto R.	11.4	2.3		9.1
Total	74.6	8.4	15.8	54.4	Total	134.4	56.8	28.5	49.1
* highest potential class, W=wild, S=scenic, R=recreational ; ** segment 5 only									

Los Padres Forest Recommends 3 Rivers

Suitability determinations were completed for eligible rivers on the Los Padres National Forest. The suitability study is the last phase of the WSR study process. Whereas the eligibility inventory only considered the river attributes, in suitability the benefits and impacts of wild and scenic river designation are considered. Factors considered include the reasonably foreseeable potential uses of the land and water that would be enhanced, foreclosed, or curtailed if the area were included in the National System, including recreation activities in the river corridor. This phase also considers management issues such as partnerships, cost, and land ownership.

The Los Padres is recommending three rivers to Congress for WSR designation as shown in Table 3. Until the rivers are designated by Congress or released from consideration, the plans direct that these rivers will be managed to maintain the river values and classification. This management direction applies only to

National Forest System lands, not adjacent private property. All existing agreements (including water rights), contracts, claims, or permits are valid and expected to continue. This is a preliminary administrative recommendation that will receive further review and possible modification by the Chief of the Forest Service, Secretary of Agriculture, and the President of the United States. The Congress has reserved the authority to make final decisions on designation of WSR as part of the National System.

Table 3. Wild and Scenic River Recommendations				
Los Padres National Forest				
Name	Miles	Classification *		
		W	S	R
Arroyo Seco R.	18.4	2.5	10.5	5.4
Piru Ck.	38.5 **	10.5	28.0	
Upper Sespe Ck.	11.5		2.0	9.5
Total Miles Recommended	68.4	13.0	40.5	14.9
* W=Wild, S=Scenic, R=Recreational				
** Not including mileage for Piru Ck. segments 6 and 7				

New Plans Make 6 Key Decisions

The National Forest Management Act of 1976 requires that national forests be managed to sustain ecosystem health and provide multiple benefits for present and future generations. It requires each national forest to develop and implement a Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) to describe and direct how this will be accomplished.

Similar to county zoning plans, Forest Plans provide a broad-based strategic framework to guide local forest managers in future site-specific planning and decision-making. Forest Plans define management parameters while providing flexibility to adapt to changing resource conditions and events such as wildfires and droughts. Adaptive management allows for the adjustment of decisions and activities based on the findings of monitoring and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The new Forest Plans are being published according to the requirements of the 1982 planning regulations. Alternative 4a was selected from the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the four southern California Forest Plan Revisions and is reflected in the Forest Plan. The Forest Plans make the following six decisions:

1. Approve forest-wide multiple-use goals (desired conditions) and objectives;
2. Determine suitability and potential capability of lands for resource production;
3. Identify suitable uses;
4. Establish forest-wide standards and management area prescriptions (province and forest-level standards, land use zones, special area designations);
5. Identify recommendations to Congress for additions to the National Wilderness Preservation and Wild and Scenic River Systems; and
6. Establish monitoring and evaluation requirements for Forest Plan implementation.

There was some concern expressed in public comments that the Forest Plan decision might change or invalidate existing legal instruments.

The Forest Plans do NOT:

- make site-specific decisions, nor do they compel forest managers to implement specific actions;
- create, authorize, or execute any ground-disturbing activity;
- grant, withhold, or modify any permit or other legal instrument (e.g. existing agreements, claims, contracts, or water rights);
- affect special uses administrative policy and processes;
- subject anyone to civil or criminal liability; or
- create legal rights.



Sisquoc River, Los Padres NF, a designated Wild and Scenic River.

Plans Recommend New Wilderness

Forest visitors seeking solitude will find more opportunities

Wilderness is a unique and vital resource, a place where nature dominates. In addition to offering primitive recreation opportunities, it is valuable for its scientific and educational uses, as a benchmark for ecological studies, and for the preservation of historical and natural features. Many members of the public asked that most or even all of the roadless areas evaluated be recommended for wilderness, often for environmental protection. Others urged that few if any further wilderness areas be recommended, generally to retain a broader choice of uses of an area—in particular to allow fire and fuels work. Although there may be some increased cost for the planning and execution of fuels projects in wilderness, managers are still able to manage for healthy forests. Land managers have the ability to

Forest	Acres of EW	RW acres	Recommended Wilderness names	Wilderness (EW and RW) as % of land
Angeles	81,924	13,231	Sheep Mountain Wilderness add	15% (+2%)
Cleveland	75,523	11,377	Cutca Valley Pine Creek Wilderness add South Hauser expansion	21% (+3%)
Los Padres	860,678	35,821	Dick Smith wilderness add Matilija wilderness add Chumash wilderness add	50% (+2%)
San Bernardino	130,362	26,428	Santa Rosa Wilderness add Cucamonga Wilderness add San Jacinto Wilderness add San Gorgonio Wilderness add Sheep Mountain Wilderness add Big Horn Mountains Wilderness add	24% (+4%)
All	1,148,487	86,857		35% (+2%)

Table 4. Recommended wilderness (RW) additions and acreage (EW=existing wilderness).

suppress wildfires in wilderness with the use of motorized equipment and mechanical transport if needed.

The Forest Service recognizes the preservation of wilderness as an important component of an overall management strategy and is recommending to Congress the roadless areas listed in Table 4. These areas

are typically additions to existing wilderness. Designation of new wildernesses may occur as a result of the new Forest Plans and future legislation. The majority of inventoried roadless areas that were not recommended for wilderness in the selected alternative are zoned for Back Country Non-Motorized or Back Country

Motorized Use Restricted. It is important to emphasize that both of these Back Country zones preserve the natural character of the areas and important resource values while allowing non-motorized public access (including mountain biking) and a full range of tools for activities like fuels treatment, fire suppression and trails management.

Research Natural Areas Recommended

Research Natural Areas (RNAs) are a part of a national network of ecological units set aside primarily for research and education and secondarily for the preservation of biodiversity. Each of the following areas were selected because they have special values that contribute to the representation of a wide range of ecological types in the RNA system:

RNA Name	Forest
Big Pine Mtn.	LPNF
Sawmill Mtn.	LPNF
White Mtn.	LPNF
Valley Oak	LPNF
Ventana Cones	LPNF
Cleghorn Cyn	SBNF
Arrastre Flat	SBNF
Broom Flat	SBNF
Wildhorse Meadow	SBNF
Blackhawk	SBNF

Also, the Cleveland National Forest will further study the Viejas, Guatay Mountain, and San Diego River areas for possible RNA recommendation. Candidate RNAs will require ecological surveys and/or establishment records before being eligible for inclusion in the RNA system. Policy only allows those uses that retain the research values for which the site is designated.

Special Interest Areas Established



Left: Foster Bear Ponds SIA
Right: Milpitas SIA
Both Special Interest Areas are on the Los Padres NF.

Special Interest Area (SIA) designation is primarily for providing recreational emphasis for areas of special geological, cultural, or biological values where interpretation and public use is encouraged.

Some of the newly established SIAs have a focus or significance that is archaeological, cultural or Native American, while some have botanical focus that include plants of cultural importance such as deer-grass meadows, oak riparian and oak woodlands. Others will

focus on interpretation of zoological, geological, or ecological values.

A management plan will be developed for each area that will identify measures to protect the special values and commensurate to the expected public use, implementation schedules, and monitoring protocols. The public may contact their local national forest for further information about recreation opportunities in SIAs. The following SIAs are established in the new plans:

SIA Name	Value	Forest
Chiquito Basin	Botany	CNF
Pine Mtn.	Botany	CNF
Liebre Mtn.	Botany	ANF
Aliso-Arrastre	Cultural	ANF
Foster Bear Ponds	Ecology, Research, Education/ Interpretation	LPNF
Camatta		LPNF
Mono Basin		LPNF
Milpitas	Cultural	LPNF
Arrastre Ck.	Botany, Heritage, Zoological	SBNF
Children's Forest	Recreation, Scenic	SBNF
San Andreas	Geology, Heritage, Zoological	SBNF

Strategy Aims to Prepare Communities for Fire

Community protection is the highest fire management priority. Accordingly, most of the hazardous fuel treatments will be for the protection of the Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI), an area where communities are located in and adjacent to the forests. Ambitious programs are already underway to deal with the significant acreage in which trees have died due to drought.

The nature of vegetation treatments will depend on proximity to communities and other site-specific conditions. Within the WUI zone there are two sub-zones called the WUI Defense Zone and the WUI Threat Zone. The Defense Zone is closest to the community with the purpose of enhancing public safety and helping firefighters to defend homes, whereas the Threat Zone is further away and intended to result in a lower intensity of future wildfires as they approach the Defense Zone. Accordingly, the treatment in the narrower Defense Zone requires the heaviest removal of fuels and typically involves the removal of dead trees near mountain communities. In contrast, in the Threat Zone the Forest Service will reduce ladder fuels and conduct prescribed burning, but plans on leaving enough large diameter snags and downed logs for key wildlife species. The guidelines do not call for wholesale vegetation clearance and



Fuel treatments such as this one in the San Bernardino NF will continue through the planning period.

accommodate brush and tree thinning over complete removal.

The fuels strategy is described in Appendix K of the Forest Plan. Little if any permanent road construction is expected in the future. Any temporary roads needed to facilitate the construction of community Defense Zones would be rehabilitated after use. Con-

structing and maintaining these zones will include addressing invasive weed control needs. Although fuels reduction is emphasized in the WUI, the plans also include strategies that address wildlife corridors and development in the Wildland/Urban Interface.

Site specific planning will determine whether treatments will use prescribed burning, or mechanical or other means. Generally speaking, most of the mechanical work will occur in community defense zones and on fuelbreaks. Fuelbreaks may be maintained by grazing, mechanical means, prescribed burning, limited herbicide use, or a combination thereof.

Fire in Wilderness

There are fears that a lack of fire suppression capability in wilderness will result in damage to communities. The new Forest Plans adopt a wilderness fire strategy that allows for prescribed burning in designated wilderness to maintain wilderness values or to provide for

community protection. In addition, Forest Service response to wildfires in southern California national forest wilderness is similar to anywhere else within the national forests. Land managers still have the full ability to suppress wildfires in wilderness with the use of motorized equipment and mechanical transport if needed. Protocols exist and are often utilized for approval of the use of equipment and aircraft to fight fires in wilderness areas.

Vegetation type conversion

Repetitive wildfires have generated substantial loss of coastal sage and chaparral at the lower elevations. The new Forest Plans aim to lengthen the interval between fires in coastal sage and prevent vegetation type conversion. The strategy focuses treatments on the community Defense Zones and fuelbreaks, and limits vegetation treatments over most of the range of coastal sage. The challenge is the large number of human caused fire ignitions in the Wildland/Urban Interface.



In southern California it's a matter of when not if wildfires will happen. Photo of Piru Fire, October 2003, Los Padres NF.

▶ PLANS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

which reflect Alternative 4a, were crafted using a combination of components from other alternatives. Most importantly, ideas from the public were used to help resolve the challenges stemming from the issues. Some of the key features of the new plans are:

Public Uses and Access:

- Limits motorized public access to designated Forest System routes;
- Allows the resolution of non-system routes over time;
- Zoning differentiates public from administrative access;

- Retains access, using permanent or temporary roads.

Limited Development:

- The plan limits development but provides for project proposals that contribute to priorities such as the National Fire Plan;
- Emphasizes expanding or improving existing facilities before building new ones;
- Retains undeveloped character and open space both in and out of designated wilderness;
- More clearly defines zones including management intent for future development and uses that are suitable.

Community Wildfire Protection:

- Emphasizes the protection of lives and property;
- Has the flexibility to adjust Wildland/Urban Interface according to Community Protection Plans.

Management of forest health and threatened and endangered species:

- Incorporates measures to protect plants and wildlife and their habitats into all management activities (this includes fuels work as long as community wildfire defense objectives can be met);
- Emphasizes the reduction of invasive species over time;

- Emphasizes the outcome of forest health;
- Uses monitoring and evaluation to adapt the plan over time.

Zoning and Special Designations:

- Makes recommendations to Congress on Wilderness (all Forests) and Wild and Scenic Rivers (Los Padres National Forest);
- Establishes additional Special Interest Areas and recommends Research Natural Areas;
- Approves new land use zones that will move the Forests toward goals and objectives established in the plans.

“Sustainable Recreation” is the Future

People flock to the national forests to seek relief from the urban lifestyle and enjoy recreational opportunities. Already heavy demand is predicted to increase by 15 to 20% over the next decade. The new Forest Plans lay the groundwork to offer a range of quality, environmentally sustainable recreation opportunities on the four southern California national forests to our culturally diverse visitor population, with minimal visitor conflicts and effects to other resources. The plans do not favor one type of recreation over another. Instead they identify the areas suitable for a variety of uses, and set the guidelines under which that use may occur.

If you build it (or don't), they will come

A number of people questioned how the Forests aim to offer additional recreation benefits without unacceptable impacts to resources and without increased budgets. The new Forest Plans address the reality of the increased populations and forest visitation and help the Forests to prepare to manage that use. They identify strategies to manage the increased recreation use while continuing to protect resources. It is true that there is not the money to eliminate every recreation problem, but Forests already are taking actions to manage recreation use by emphasizing where various activities should occur and setting parameters for them.

Recreation management will focus on the maintenance or expansion of existing facilities before constructing new facilities. There may be a low level of increase in facilities, including both public and administrative infrastructure. Any expansion is also based upon expanded partnerships, funding and support.

Sustainable recreation

The Forest Plans have a strategic goal to supply a balanced range of environmentally sustainable recreation opportunities on the four national



San Gabriel Canyon, Angeles NF.

forests for culturally diverse visitors of all ages and abilities.

In certain cases the public will be asked to cooperate in adjusting their recreational use in the forest in order to protect resources and enable quality recreation opportunities to continue to be offered to future generations. The land use zoning defines some uses as unsuitable in given areas. Motorized use is restricted to designated roads, trails and areas. Off-highway vehicle use is further restricted to roads and trails that are specifically designated for use by non-highway licensed vehicles. Mountain biking is allowed on designated roads and trails except in existing or recommended wilderness or as otherwise prohibited (e.g. the Pacific Crest Trail).

Other Forest Plan direction will also influence recreation activities. One standard directs the Forest Service to mitigate impacts of recreation activities on habitat for listed species. Mitigation measures may include area closure if needed for species protection. Another standard discourages camping or other recreation activities within sensitive habitat areas, especially in riparian areas—although this will not prohibit camping or trail use on any designated site or trail.

One of the steps to reduce conflicts and impacts to resources is to manage the number of people allowed at one time. The “adaptive mitigation for recreation uses” in the Forest Plan triggers a sequence of management practices designed to stabilize these effects and move toward an environmentally sustainable condition. Based upon comments received, this mitigation has

been expanded to address conflicts between users and all natural and cultural resources—not just plants and animals—that put sustainability at risk. Mitigation for user conflicts, including overcrowding, is also addressed. When impacts (whether social or natural resource) are detected, the mitigation provides the guidance to rectify the conflict, which may also involve safety issues. In order to protect resources, a broad range of practices may be used. Examples include conservation education, controlling an area’s perimeter, limiting use, or engineering a site. The intent is to maximize recreation enjoyment by using the least intrusive strategies or practices at recreation sites that will at the same time ensure sustainability of both natural resources and recreation opportunities. The new mitigation will be applied broadly to recreation of all kinds.

Environmental Education

Strong environmental stewardship and conservation education play a key role in encouraging sustainable recreation and are main tools in the “adaptive mitigation process.” Conservation education imparts knowledge about the significance of forest and cultural resources, environmental features of interest, Forest Service mission and policy, and the behaviors that preserve and respect the environment.

The Forest Plan emphasizes conservation education and proactive outreach to both traditional and nontraditional users. It also stresses building environmental stewardship and conservation education partnerships and improving services, especially to underserved and low income populations.



Accessible campground, Cleveland NF.



A turn of the century Ranger on the Cleveland NF during “Living History.”

Plans Set OHV Course



OHV group volunteering to improve route on San Bernardino NF.

The public voiced a high level of interest in proper management of OHV access and use, including concern by some to maintain motorized access and by others for long-term resource protection. Recent Agency direction to increase the level of management of recreation and OHV use has been incorporated into the planning process for the FEIS.

Where OHV allowed

Under the new Forest Plans, OHV use is suitable in the two zones that allow motorized public access (Developed Area Interface and Back Country). Existing designated OHV roads, trails and areas occur in zoning where OHV is a suitable use.

Motorized use is restricted to designated roads, trails and areas. Off-highway vehicle use is further restricted to roads and trails that are specifically designated for use by non-highway licensed vehicles (including non-licensed motorcycles) and to the limited open areas on the Cleveland and Angeles National Forests. It is important to emphasize that motorized vehicle travel off of designated routes or areas is not allowed.

Future Improvements

Improvements to the OHV system for enthusiast safety, resource protection, and enjoyment are anticipated over time. Land use zon-

ing and management direction in the new plans will support improvements to the existing OHV system that focus on sustainable opportunities for long distance routes with potential to link isolated OHV routes or systems, loop opportunities, and a variety of difficulty levels. The level of construction can be characterized as low.

The Forest Plans approve zoning that is instrumental to where future route improvements may be considered and provide criteria for designing site-specific projects (including resource protection).

A number of unauthorized routes will be reviewed. Those that offer opportunities to improve the system may be added to the classified National Forest System roads or trails. All the rest will be decommissioned. However, decisions to designate/construct, relocate, or close OHV routes are not made in the Forest Plans and require project-level analysis and public involvement.

Designated Route Policy

There is a current effort being undertaken by the Agency to better manage the OHV activity and move toward a designated route policy. In the coming months, the OHV route designation process will involve the public in review and confirmation of inventory. The Forest Service will incorporate the decisions regarding motorized access into the route designation process.



Motorcycling opportunity on the Los Padres NF.

IN BRIEF

Target Shooting in Designated Areas



“A Place to Shoot,” a designated shooting area on the Angeles NF.

Recreational target shooting includes the use of firearms, air guns and gas guns that are not associated with hunting. This activity is allowed only in designated shooting areas and managed shooting ranges in land use zones except Critical Biological, Existing Wilderness and Recommended Wilderness. Currently permitted managed ranges will remain open under the new Forest Plans. Additional areas may be designated in the future if they are approved through site-specific analysis.

This management direction has already been in place on three of the Forests. However, this direction will be a fundamental change for Los Padres National Forest and is in response to increasing concerns about public safety, fire hazard and resource damage associated with unmanaged target shooting. The identification of designated shooting areas will be a public process and will occur over time.

Shooting associated with hunting is not affected by recreational target shooting policy. Hunting will continue as regulated by State law.

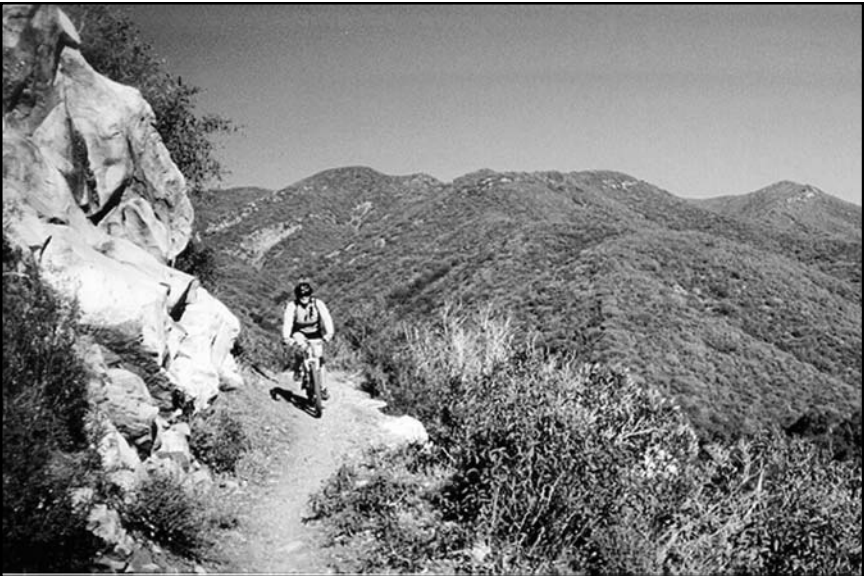
Plans Retain Hang Gliding Take-offs

Hang-gliding and paragliding are allowed on the national forests except as prohibited by regulation in designated wilderness. Known hang-gliding take-off sites considered in the analysis remain available.

Fixed Anchor Bolt Proposal Dropped

Two sentences in the Draft San Bernardino Forest Plan proposing a ban on new fixed anchor bolts for rock climbing caused a deluge of comments from the climbing community, including climbers in Switzerland and Australia! After further study and coordination, the Forest chose to drop the proposed standard and tier to forthcoming Forest Service fixed anchor national direction. Rock climbing is suitable in all zones.

Biking Allowed on System Routes



Mountain biking on the Los Padres NF.

The Forest Service intends to supply mountain biking opportunities on official National Forest System trails. Mountain biking on system roads and trails is suitable in all land use zones (including Back Country Motorized Use Restricted and Critical Biological zones) except existing and recommended wilderness or as otherwise prohibited. For example, mountain biking is prohibited on the Pacific Crest Trail. Riding off system roads and trails (e.g. utility corridors or user-created roads and trails) will no longer be allowed.

National Forest System Roads Retained

The public expressed a high level of interest in providing adequate motorized access for public and administrative needs, yet considering natural resources as well.

The Forest Plan strategy is for a National Forest System Road network that meets plan objectives, promotes sustainable resource conditions, and safely accommodates anticipated levels and types of use. Land use zoning in the plan identifies where public motorized use or road construction is suitable. Road mileage is not expected to substantially increase, but some small-scale road construction is anticipated (e.g. to access a special-use project or private property).

Due to many comments regarding the need for fire suppression, community protection, and forest health improvements, all National Forest System Roads are retained although public use is restricted in some locations through application of the Back Country Motorized Used Restricted land use zoning.

Roads Analysis and Identifying Priority Roads Workload

The multi-forest scale Roads Analysis Process (RAP), prepared in accordance with national guidance, identified and

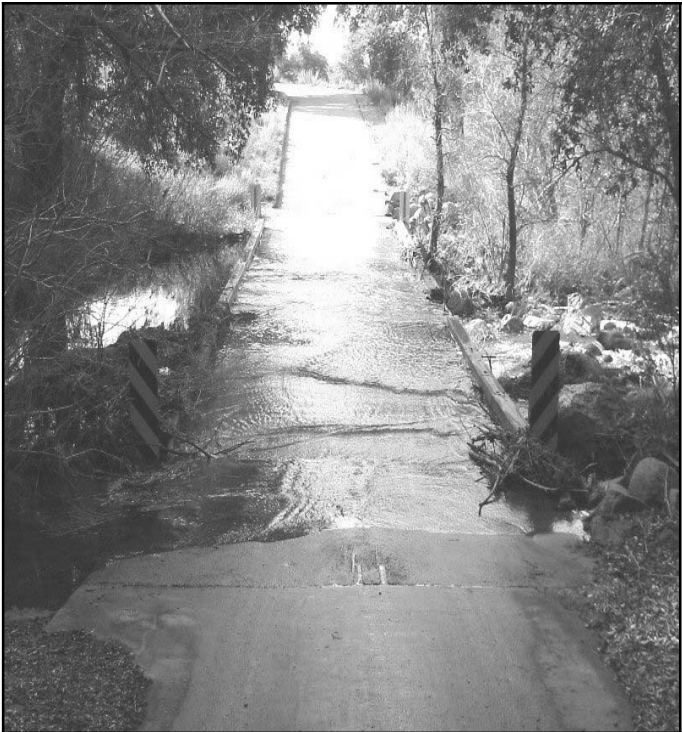
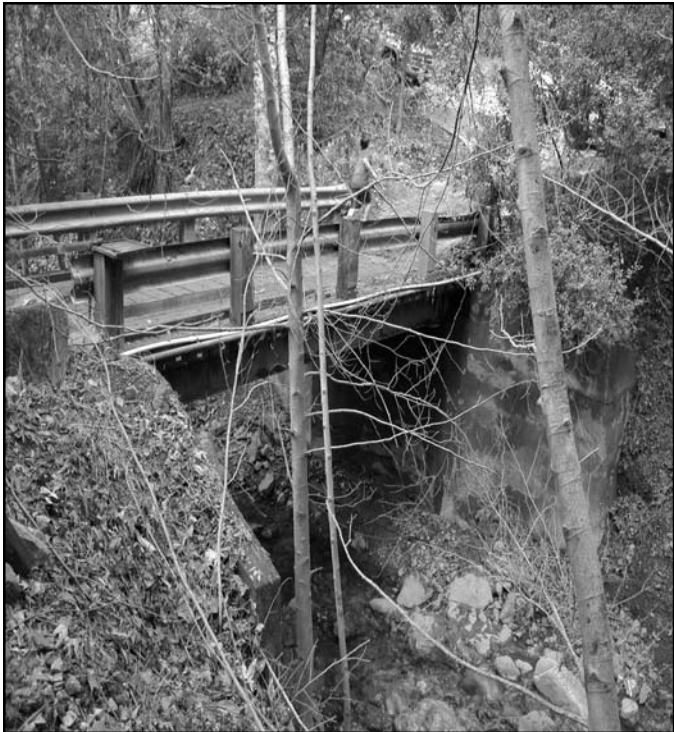
ranked National Forest System Roads (including all maintenance levels) as to their environmental risk, measured along with their public and administrative need. Roads needed to access authorized uses are considered needed and were retained. The process resulted in identifying some roads as high risk and priority for mitigation. As the plan is implemented, the RAP will guide the priorities for addressing the road maintenance backlog to provide safe, efficient routes for recreation-

ists and through-traveling public, to safely accommodate fire protection equipment and other high clearance vehicles, and to address resources needs (e.g. repair or mitigation of the effects of roads located in riparian areas, wetlands and uplands will be an emphasis).

Unclassified Roads

There will be fewer unnecessary unclassified roads (those roads on Forest lands but not managed as a part of the transportation system)

over time. User-created roads and trails often cause damage because they are not engineered to minimize soil erosion and negative impacts to water quality and aquatic life. If future site-specific analyses and decisions determine that there is a public need for an unclassified road, it may be added to the system. Those determined to be unnecessary for conversion to either the road or trail system will be decommissioned, and the landscapes restored.



National Forest System Roads such as these on the Cleveland NF are **classified roads** that are under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service. **Classified roads** are those needed for motor vehicle access, authorized by the Forest Service, and intended for long-term use.

Land Adjustment to Provide Access and Protect Wildlife Corridors

The new Forest Plans' land adjustment strategy has a broad focus toward consolidating National Forest System land to improve overall manageability. It is common for the Forests to work with partners and resources from outside the

Agency to achieve this goal. The national forests have long recognized the importance of the southern California national forests to regional biological diversity. Many forest species have much of their population off of the national

forests. Failure to protect connections between the national forests and other ownerships could result in the loss of species and natural processes. The Forest Plan's Land Adjustment Prioritization Guide (Appendix I) lists habitat linkage

protection as one of the priorities for land adjustment.

Land adjustment is not the only way to address habitat linkage preservation, one of the main issues addressed by the forest plan revision. In order to maintain biological diversity and ecosystem health on the southern California national forests, the Forests need to be actively involved in planning and conservation efforts with adjacent ownerships. The Forest Service has been an active participant in the identification and protection of landscape linkages for many years and is a partner in the South Coast Missing Linkages Project. In addition, non-motorized land use zoning has been employed in many areas where needed to help maintain large landscape linkages and additional wilderness areas have been recommended.

In addition to land adjustment, another strategic emphasis will be the acquisition of needed rights-of-way for roads and trails across non-National Forest System lands. This will support forest activities and public needs.



In and around the urban forests, habitat linkages need to be protected.



The mountain lion is one of many species that would benefit from conservation of wildlife movement corridors.

Battling the Invaders of the Forest

The invaders often arrive by hitching a ride with an unsuspecting person. Though new to the neighborhood, they quickly establish themselves, multiply and spread. They may displace native residents, siphon off the community water supply, eat the community food supply—and sometimes even eat the native residents....

The threat to the health of ecosystems from invasive nonnative plant and animal species has made the battle against them a national priority. Treating invasive nonnative species is of particular importance for protecting habitat of threatened and endangered species, especially in riparian areas. A strategic goal in the new Forest Plans is to reverse the trend of increasing loss of natural resource values due to invasive species.

In the southern California national forests, weeds are spreading at an increasing rate, especially along roads, trails, and stream corridors. The movement of humans, vehicles, equipment, boats, live-



Bullfrogs are effective predators. Threatened, endangered and sensitive species such as arroyo toads, California red-legged frogs, and others have been found in the stomachs of bullfrogs on the forests.

stock, wildlife, wind and water can spread seed and reproductive plant parts. Why has there been an increase in weeds in recent decades? Increased population growth has resulted in more soil disturbing activities including the construction of infrastructure to support recent growth. Motorized travel through infested areas may spread weed seeds. Use of weed-infested hay, straw or mulch will spread weeds. Weeds may spread without anyone being aware that they might be hitching a ride on a vehicle, pet, or clothing.

The new Forest Plans emphasize the reduction of invasive species over time. The weed management strategy for the four Forests includes the following:

- Educate people about the noxious weed problem. Work to prevent the introduction and



Volunteers work to eradicate tamarisk along the Santa Ynez River, Los Padres NF.

establishment of noxious weeds. Those using livestock need to ensure that, when it becomes available, feed used on the forest is free of noxious weeds. The public can also help by not placing any bullfrogs, goldfish or other nonnative fish into forest streams.

- Treat infested areas. Focus on early detection and treatment of new infestations and species on the Forests.
- Integrate weed risk assessment and proper guidance into all projects and activities. For example, the Forests will manage fuels treatment areas to minimize risk

of unauthorized vehicle or mountain biking use so that disturbed areas recover.

- Inventory, map and monitor status so that we know how successful efforts are.
- Research and learn more about weed ecology. Improve removal methods.
- Develop strong partnerships and cooperate with neighbors, other agencies, permit holders and others for a united approach to managing invasive species.
- Retains the option of limited use of herbicides after site-specific analysis including public involvement.

Emphasis on Connection and Day Use for Non-motorized Trails



Pacific Crest Trail as it crosses the Cleveland National Forest.

The new Forest Plans emphasize supplying a safe, environmentally sustainable range of trail-based opportunities on official system trails. In response to public comment, the Forest Service intends to link non-motorized system trails with community trail networks and improve day-use recreational opportunities over time. Most trails will be shared use. Any decision to construct a new trail, trail links, or loops; reroute a trail; or convert a particular road to a hiking trail will require site-specific planning and public involvement.

Pacific Crest Trail

A 324-mile segment of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT), a nationally significant recreational feature, traverses across three Forests (Cleveland, San Bernardino, and Angeles National Forests). One Forest Plan strategy is to manage the PCT to protect the trail experience for future hikers, and provide for the conservation and enjoyment of its nationally important scenic, historic, natural and cultural qualities. Areas surrounding and viewed from the trail will be managed to protect the scenic integrity.

Forest Management to Support Other Plan Goals



Forest stand after two thinning treatments, Los Padres NF.

Forest management emphasizes the retention of large, old trees. Timber production in itself is not a goal of the Forest Plans. The new Forest Plans for the southern California national forests do not identify any land as suitable for timber sale production and the allowable sale quantity for merchantable timber is zero.

Logging in the form of thinning and salvage treatments, which may include the removal of large dead trees, will be used to work toward healthy forests and community protection. Mortality removal will be con-

ducted within 1.5 miles of threatened communities. While sometimes similar to salvage logging, the term “mortality removal” also includes the removal of non-merchantable trees and dead shrubs. The plans have new standards that identify appropriate ways to treat forest stands and vegetation by general forest type, and define criteria for project planning including desired leave trees and downed materials. Harvest will follow Forest Plan direction including all laws and other overarching management direction.

Forest Plans Add Protection for Species

The national forests of southern California are considered a ‘hotspot’ of biological diversity, home to an estimated 3,000 native species of fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals and vascular plants. Over time, intense human uses in the southern California area have resulted in increased numbers of species federally listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. There are 68 threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, and 171 Forest Service sensitive species known or with the potential to occur on the four southern California national forests of southern California (as of June 2005). Much of the last remaining habitat for some of these species is found on National Forest System lands which provide a biological refugia for the species in areas generally surrounded by urban development.

One of the approaches used in the new plans to manage for these species and their habitat is the new Critical Biological zone. Other than limited exceptions, most types of development are not suitable in this zone. Target shooting, dispersed area camping, and OHV use are not suitable. In response to comment, mountain biking on designated trails is allowed and fuelwood harvest is only allowed by exception. The intent of Critical Biological zoning is to include

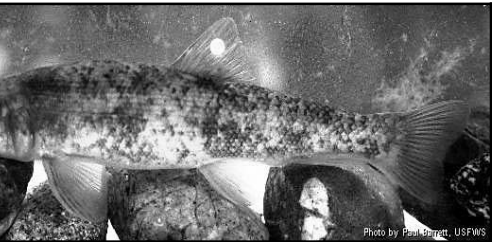
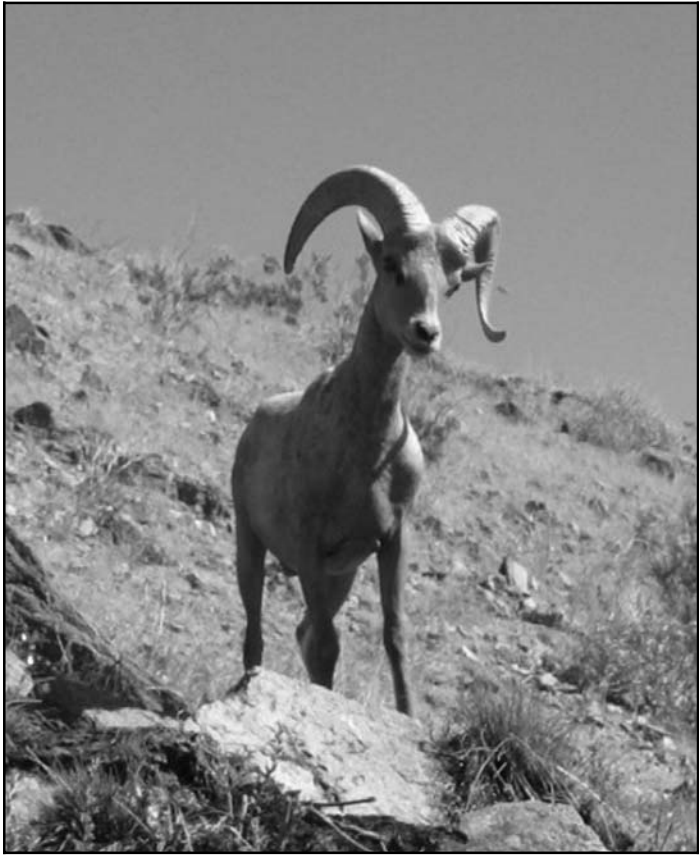


Forest Service Sensitive or listed species, clockwise from bottom left: sticky dudleya, Plummer's mariposa lily, California jewelflower, Orcutt's brodiaea, Parish's meadowfoam.

land that is the most important area necessary for the management of some of the most at risk species, generally focusing on areas where there are active conflicts between certain listed species and existing facilities or activities such as campgrounds, road crossings (low water fords), and grazing allotments. There is no intent to exclude all authorized uses from all suitable species habitat, especially those uses that have no substantial impact on the habitat of these species. The Forest Service will manage this zoning for neutral or beneficial effects on the species therein, which includes some threatened and endangered species. Short-term adverse impacts are accepted if they will be com-

pensated by the accrual of long-term benefits to habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species. In response to public comment, the final Forest Plans now include more Critical Biological zones than found in the Draft Plans. In addition to Critical Biological zoning, the new Forest Plans use a combination of land use zoning (e.g., wilderness), special designations (e.g., Wild and Scenic Rivers), and Forest Plan goals, objectives, and standards as an overarching strategy for providing protection to habitat, species, and biological diversity. Thus, occupied and suitable habitats for many species-at-risk are afforded protection

across all the other land use zones as well. Under the new plans, the philosophy is not one of a separate biological resources program but one of goals, strategies and standards interwoven into the fabric of the plan and virtually every other program area. The long-term desired condition is to provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species. There is a complete assortment of Forest Plan standards and other criteria for the Forest Service to apply to new and ongoing management actions in order to avoid or mitigate effects to federally listed and/or Forest Service sensitive species. One plan standard calls for the incorporation of species guidance into the development of site-specific projects and activities. This guidance includes life history accounts and Conservation Strategies for almost 500 species of potential conservation concern. Together, the Forest Plan and overarching management direction (laws, Agency policy, etc.) provide protection for federally listed and other species and their habitat. At the same time, the plans allow for implementation of essential projects such as fuels and forest health treatments. Species inventory and monitoring, as well as Forest Plan monitoring and evaluation, will lead to course corrections to the plan as necessary.



Some of the federally listed species (clockwise from bottom left): least Bell's vireo, arroyo toad, California condor, Peninsular bighorn sheep, southwestern willow flycatcher, mountain yellow-legged frog, bald eagle, Smith's blue butterfly, Stephen's kangaroo rat, Laguna Mountains skipper (butterfly), Santa Ana sucker.

Sustained, Healthy Water Flows for People and Resources

The Forests are home to the headwaters and primary source areas for most of the major river systems in southern California and provide water for municipal, commercial and agricultural uses off of the national forests.

Of course water is not only critical to people but to all life. *Riparian and aquatic ecosystems*--those areas associated with water such as those lands in and adjacent to streams, montane meadows, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, wetlands, vernal pools, seeps, springs and other bodies of water--are rich areas of biological diversity. These areas are important habitat for birds, mammals and aquatic life and play a vital role in the survival of most of the species-at-risk. No other habitat type in the southern California national forests has been as dramatically altered by human activities as the freshwater riparian habitat.

Healthy watersheds play a key role in providing clean water and sustaining aquatic ecosystem health. *Watersheds* are areas that catch rain and snow that drain into rivers, streams, and lakes. In fact, watershed protection is a primary purpose of the national forests. Congress directed in the Organic Act that these lands be set aside "to improve the forest within boundaries, or for the purpose of securing favorable conditions of water flows..."

A major goal is to improve watershed conditions through cooperative management including sustaining a high quantity and quality of water. For the plan revisions, watersheds wholly or partially on



Water for a number of local communities originates on the southern California national forest watersheds.

the Forests were evaluated in terms of natural and human caused risks to their health, using indicators based on hydrology, soils, and geology. This is part of the Forest Service's watershed management program, which seeks to manage activities to protect the watersheds against degradation.

When the health of a watershed is found to be at risk, steps must be taken to remedy the problem. It is standard operating procedure for the Forest Service to rehabilitate watersheds following wildfires. The plan revision evaluation showed that most of the poor conditions were associated with high road densities, agriculture, and urban developments within the floodplains located outside of national forest boundaries. Because watersheds do not recognize political

boundaries, it is often necessary to work collaboratively with all landowners in a watershed to address problems. Also, cooperation will be emphasized when working to secure the instream flows needed for forest resources and uses.

The Forests' watershed strategy is comprehensive. Some other actions include: addressing abandoned and inactive landfills; reclaiming abandoned mines; assessing and applying geologic resources and hazards information; disposing of displaced soil and rock debris onto approved placement sites; and addressing permits with species/water use conflicts. A new standard provides additional guidance for authorizing water diversions and groundwater extractions.

Another Forest Plan goal is to improve riparian conditions. The

new plans create a concept called the Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs) to provide protection for riparian areas through directing a consistent approach to project screening and planning for appropriate activities in these areas. Only those activities designed to protect, maintain, or restore the riparian ecosystem are allowed. RCAs do not preclude activities such as the many authorized uses that have no substantial impact on riparian areas or associated species habitats.

The Forest Plan combines strategies and standards related to watershed, geology, riparian areas, water management and hazardous materials to improve watershed and riparian conditions. These, in turn, further other goals such as improving forest health and habitats.

Resource Protection incorporated into Mining and Energy Development

A strategic goal of the Forest Plan is to administer minerals and energy resource development while protecting ecosystem health.

The southern California national forests have a long history associated with mining and mineral resource production. A wide variety of minerals and energy resources are found on southern California national forests, including precious minerals (e.g. gold), oil and gas, high quality metallurgical, chemical and cement grade carbonate rocks, and mineral materials (crushed sand and gravel). Strategies and standards in the new Forest Plans will help to guide the design of site-specific mining activities and protect resources.

The limestone mines on the north side of the San Bernardino Mountains are some of the largest and most productive in



Sespe oil fields, Los Padres NF.

the United States. The San Bernardino National Forest (SBNF) has worked with the mining community, BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Native Plant Society to develop the Carbonate Habitat Management Strategy (CHMS) for the expressed purpose of protecting biological resources. The strategy includes specific criteria for conservation, land acquisition and mining, and is a part of the SBNF Plan. A new Research

Natural Area (Blackhawk) will also help to protect carbonate habitat over the long-term.

The Forest Service expects to recommend that about 2-5% of land area be withdrawn from mineral entry over the life of the plan, including acreage withdrawn as Wilderness, Research Natural Areas, and/or Wild and Scenic Rivers. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is the agency that actually has the authority to withdraw lands from mineral entry.

Non-renewable energy re-

sources (such as oil and gas) have been produced for decades on the Los Padres National Forest, and some potential exists for development on the Angeles National Forest. The new Forest Plans for these two Forests provide additional guidance for oil and gas development including direction to avoid disturbance, and avoid or minimize impacts to listed species that would apply to any approved project.

The Oil and Gas Leasing FEIS has been incorporated into the new Forest Plan for the Los Padres National Forest. Accordingly, the standards and guidelines for environmental protection therein apply to all projects and activities on the Los Padres National Forest.

No approval of site-specific proposals is made in the Forest Plan or in the Los Padres' Oil and Gas Leasing FEIS. Prior to oil and gas exploration and development which could affect condors or other species, all required environmental analysis and consultation would occur.

Livestock Grazing Continues under the New Forest Plans

Livestock grazing pre-dates the establishment of the National Forest System. Spanish missionaries brought herds of cattle, sheep and horses from Mexico in the early 1800s and began propagating them to supply the missions. Over the years, the number of grazing areas and livestock numbers on the lands later established as the national forests has declined, while the level of management has increased. All livestock grazing is administered through various forms of grazing permits or special-use authorizations. The Forest Plans acknowledge the ranching heritage of the national forests as well as its associated benefits.

Today, grazing within the four southern California national forests occurs mainly in and adjacent to the Los Padres National Forest, and to a lesser extent, in and adjacent to the Cleveland, San Bernardino and Angeles National Forests. Cattle (and to a lesser degree, horses) account for the majority of the grazing, with a small amount of sheep permitted on the Angeles National Forest to maintain and reduce the quantity of fuel and to maintain fuelbreaks. There are 207 livestock



Cattle grazing, Cleveland NF.

grazing areas on the four Forests—141 are active, which means livestock graze them most years, and 66 are vacant.

Improving rangeland conditions is a strategic goal of the new Forest Plans. The new plans maintain all active grazing areas and provide for grazing where forest resources are sustainable. The only possible new allotments will be on the Los Pa-

dres National Forest and are recent land acquisitions with previous grazing history. Based on a forest-level analysis of the existing grazing allotments, rangeland conditions within the national forests were generally found to be satisfactory or moving toward the desired condition, with no areas of major deterioration.

A low to moderate decline in

active grazing areas is expected over the life of the Forest Plans, partly due to the reduction in livestock grazing suitable acres, but also related to private land issues. In addition, the number of vacant grazing areas is expected to decrease to less than half of the status quo. Importantly, the Forest Plan direction is strategic only, so no decisions are made in the new plans to close allotments, active or vacant. Site-specific analysis (including public involvement) is needed for:

- authorization of any new grazing allotments, including site-specific improvements;
- closure of a livestock grazing area.

All site-specific actions will be guided by the new plans' strategies and standards. A number of standards place constraints on livestock grazing to protect riparian areas, listed species habitat, and other resources. Management of wild horse and burro territories and herds on the Los Padres and San Bernardino National Forests will remain the same.

Recreation and Non-Recreation Special Use Authorizations Continue

Plans allow for limited development to support goals and national priorities

Growing populations and expanding urban development are increasing the demand for development and use of forest land and resources. The Forest Plans address development on National Forest System (NFS) land at the strategic level, describing guidance such as land use zoning for the consideration of project proposals. The plans support Agency priorities such as the National Energy Initiative and include a strategic goal to identify

utility corridors needed to transport energy into and out of southern California. This will be balanced with goals to support resource management and protection objectives.

Management direction is to optimize opportunities to co-locate facilities and minimize the encumbrance of NFS land. In addition, Forest Service policy directs that proposals for occupancy and use be developed on non-NFS land when and where they can be reasonably accommodated.

The designation of any NFS land for occupancy and use (e.g., transportation systems, energy developments, water developments, etc.) will be determined at the project level and will be subject to site-specific analysis. The Forest Plans will not make decisions for

designation of land based on any project level proposal nor do they affect the processes used for special use administration.

Some people asked that the plans contain management direction to slow the rate of urban sprawl to the internal and external boundaries of the national forests but this is beyond Forest Service jurisdiction.

Special Uses Administration

The new Forest Plans do not make decisions that will authorize, withhold or modify any permits. Existing designated utility corridors, communication sites, transportation corridors, shooting areas, and recreation residence tracts with approved recreation residences are

identified in "Other Designations" in Part 2 of the Plans.

Recreation Residences

Recreation residences are privately owned structures authorized on NFS land. The new Forest Plans direct that no recreation residence lots or tracts be approved outside of established tracts. Also, should a recreation residence be destroyed, substantially damaged, or become property of the United States, the Forest Plans specify criteria to be met for safe occupancy and availability for re-building, or building on any in lieu lots. Administrative procedures such as the Compliance Review and Consistency Determination process are not affected by plan implementation.



Special uses authorized on the southern California Forests include communication sites, water improvements, ski areas, recreation residences and utility corridors.

Protecting and Interpreting our Heritage

Heritage resources (defined as cultural, historical, archaeological, ethnographic, and tribal) represent past human activities or uses and cultural values. Heritage resources on the southern California national forests represent a diversity of cultures and their uses of landscapes, including native people, colonial California, late 19th and 20th century state and American history, Civilian Conservation Corps, World War II and post-WWII military features, the Cold War, and Forest Service history.

The concentration of cultural sites on the southern California national forests is among the highest of all the national forests in the state, to date including over 80 nationally and state-designated historic places and landmarks on the national forests. A dozen tribes are known to have been present at the time of European contact in the area of the southern California forests. Many sites are located on the national forests, including Native American villages and other habitation sites, cultural landscapes, traditional cultural properties, plant and mineral resource collection areas and sites, food processing sites, tool manufacturing sites, trails, and ceremonial sites. Historic sites on



Examples of both prehistoric and historic interpretation at the Mt. Baldy Visitor Center, Angeles NF.

the Forests include mines, roads, homesteads, cabins, hotels, railways, timber extraction sites, Forest Service administration sites, recreation residences, resorts, Civilian Conservation Corps camps, water diversion and impoundment structures, and military bases and features. By studying heritage resources, we can learn about cultural and environmental interactions

over time. Updated ethnographic overviews, completed as a part of the forest plan revision, help us learn about Native American heritage by listening to the oral histories. Applicable law, policy, direction, and programmatic agreements provide the basis for the protection of heritage resources. The new Forest Plans include strategies to

mitigate any adverse effects to heritage resources, develop site management plans and implement them using partnerships, and continue to increase knowledge through inventory. Public involvement in stewardship of heritage resource sites is encouraged. The new adaptive mitigation for recreation uses will be used to not only protect natural resources but also heritage resources.

Forest Service Decision Commits to Tribal and Native American Interests

The relationship of the Forest Service with American Indians is important in the management and restoration of ecosystems in southern California. The Forest Plans recognize the importance of natural resources, open space, and a healthy forest to the Native American culture.

To meet trust responsibilities and to encourage the participation of American Indians in national forest management, the Forest Service has made a number of commitments as a part of the Forest Plan decision including: consultation for fire and fuel management activities, maintenance of access to sa-

cred and ceremonial sites, protection of sensitive and proprietary information, development of protocols for consultations and monitoring, and consideration of traditional uses and practices when planning management activities. The Forest Plans emphasize strengthening relationships with

tribal governments and the Native American community, working together to resolve issues of mutual concern and to facilitate the continued traditional and cultural tribal use of the national forest. Each national forest consulted with tribes on the Forest Plan revision.

Planning Timeline

Winter 2001	The planning process was introduced at community meetings. Public comments regarding "values" and "visions" were captured.
Spring 2001	All "currently available data" to be used in the plan revision was displayed for public review and comment at community meetings.
Fall 2001	The Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register. The public reviewed and commented on the Proposed Action and helped identify issues.
Winter 2002	Public workshops were held to help clarify issues and gather ideas for alternatives.
Summer 2002	An interdisciplinary planning team was formed with representatives from each forest. Significant issues were identified.
Fall 2002 – Winter 2003	Management alternatives were developed to respond to the issues.
February – March 2003	Preliminary alternatives were shared with the public at community open houses.
Summer 2003	The planning team analyzed effects of alternatives.
Fall 2003 – Winter 2004	Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and four draft Forest Plans developed.
May 14 – August 11, 2004	The formal public review and comment period was held for the Draft EIS and the four draft Forest Plans.
August 2004 – Spring 2005	The planning team and forest managers reviewed the public comments and used them to develop the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and four final Forest Plans.
September 30, 2005	The Record of Decision, four Forest Plans and FEIS were published and distributed. The Legal Notice was published in the Sacramento Bee newspaper. A Notice of Availability was published in the Federal Register.
October 2005	Each forest hosts community open houses to introduce the new Forest Plans.
October 30, 2005	Forest Plan implementation begins.
December 29, 2005	The appeal period closes.

Public Encouraged to Participate in Forest Activities

The Forest Service needs the help of communities and other agencies to work toward common goals

The new Forest Plans emphasize the importance of enlisting the support of local communities, other agencies, partners and others to enhance public service and promote land stewardship. Much of the vitally important work needed to further national goals such as managing invasive species, recreation, or healthy forests will be at least partially accomplished by emphasis on cooperation, partnership and volunteer strategies, as described in the Forest Plans.

Collaboration to develop community fire protection plans will continue to be an important part of the priority fuels workload identified in the Forest Plans. There are a number of local community-based Fire Safe Councils that are instrumental in planning for and effecting change in making their communities more defensible. The local national forests can assist the public in contacting a Council close to them.



Some of the many ways people may be involved in their national forests include: participating in Fire Safe Councils (Smokey visits a Council in photo) or in forest planning and implementation; and volunteering for activities such as maintaining trails or routes, or planting trees.

People are encouraged to work with their local District Ranger and project leaders on District activities or projects. For information about planning projects on the national forests, check the local forest web-

site or contact your local Forest Service office.

We encourage anyone interested in participating in volunteer activities on the national forests to contact the local national forest Volun-

teer Coordinator or your local Ranger District. You may also find out more about ongoing activities by visiting the forest website. (See Forest contact information on opposite page).

Plans Slated to Go into Effect in 30 Days

The new Forest Plans for the southern California Forests become effective 30 days from the date on which the Notice of Availability is published in the Federal Register.

Transition to new plans

The new management direction will apply to all project decisions made on or after the effective date of this decision, but does not apply to any projects that have had decisions made prior to the effective date of the Forest Plan decision. Projects currently under contract, permit, or other authorizing instrument are not affected by the decision; however, projects may be modified to adopt all or part of this direction where Forest Service managers deem appropriate. Re-issuance of existing authorizations will be treated as new decisions, which must be consistent with the new Forest Plan direction.

As projects and activities are

proposed to implement the Forest Plan, the Forests will conduct planning in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act for site-specific decisions that have physical or biological effects.

Administrative appeals

The decision to select the management alternative reflected in the revised Forest Plans is subject to appeal by filing a written Notice of Appeal, in duplicate, within 90 days of the date specified in the published legal notice of this decision (Sacramento Bee). For a period not to exceed 20 days following the filing of a Notice of Appeal, the Reviewing Officer shall accept requests to intervene in the appeal from any interested or potentially affected person or organization. The procedures and requirements for filing an appeal are found in the regulations at 36 CFR 217. Appeals must be filed with the Chief of the

Forest Service at either of the following addresses:

For regular mail:

Chief, USDA Forest Service
Attn: EMC Staff – Appeals, Stop 1104
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-1104

For ground delivery:

Chief, USDA Forest Service
Attn: EMC Staff – Appeals
201 14th St., SW
3rd Floor Central
Washington, D.C. 20024

A copy must also be sent to:

USDA Forest Service
Pacific Southwest Region
Attn: Appeals and Litigation
1323 Club Drive
Vallejo, CA 94592

The appeal regulation text is available on the Forest Service website:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/applit/>

Adaptive management

The Forest Plans will be monitored and evaluated, and adapted accordingly. The intent of adaptive management is to learn from experience and change management practices when they are found to not meet specific objectives for protection of resources.

The Forest Service encourages the public to continue to work with their local District Ranger not only on site-specific projects that implement the Forest Plans but also on monitoring the plan itself. (In contrast, appeals are limited to resolving issues within the scope of the plan, not site-specific issues.) Should plan monitoring show that circumstances or science has changed, or that strategies being used are not achieving the desired results, the Forest Service can amend the plan.

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Where can I get my questions answered?

Questions that you may still have about the Forest Plans can be answered in several different ways.

First, you may look through the Forest Plan revision documents themselves. To help you find things in the Forest Plan, the organization of the plan is explained in our “*Guide to Understanding the Forest Plans*” which is available on the Forest website and at any Forest Service office.

Reference copies of the plan revision documents are available at Forest Service offices or at 143 libraries throughout southern California (see the Forest website for a full listing of library addresses).

All the final Forest Plans and supporting documents are now posted on your local Forest website. If you would like your own copy of the documents, make your request to the local Forest Public Affairs staff (see phone numbers in this article). You may request a CD or print version. Print versions may be limited.

The second way to learn more about the new plans is to attend one of the open houses that is being hosted specifically to explain the new Forest Plans. (See the open house schedule on this page.)

Third, if you still have questions about the Forest Plan revision documents, call the Planning Officer on your local national forest:

Angeles

Clem Lagrosa, 626-574-1613;

Cleveland

Tom White, 858-674-2901;

Los Padres

Jim Turner, 805-968-6640;

San Bernardino

Ruth Wenstrom, 909-382-2600.

Important: Note the Forest website addresses in the sidebar on this page. There is no longer a separate plan revision website. To ensure a smooth transition, the old plan revision website will have links to the Forest websites.

Find all
planning documents on
the internet at:

www.fs.fed.us/r5/angeles

www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland

www.fs.fed.us/r5/lospadres

www.fs.fed.us/r5/sanbernardino



Open House Schedule *

Vicinity of Angeles National Forest

Huntington Park: October 13, 6:00-8:00pm, Family Center-Oldtimers Foundation, 3355 E. Gage Ave
Rosemead: October 17, 6:00-8:00pm, Garvey Center, 8838 E. Valley Boulevard
Santa Clarita: October 18, 6:00-8:00pm, Santa Clarita Activities Center, 20880 Centre Pointe Parkway
Wrightwood: October 19, 6:00-8:00pm, Wrightwood Community Center, 1275 Highway 2
Claremont: October 20, 6:00-8:00pm, Alexander Hughes Community Center, 1700 Danbury Road
Los Angeles: October 22, 9:00-11:00am, Glassell Park, 3650 Verdugo Road
Los Angeles: October 22, 2:00-4:00pm, Watts Community Center, 10950 S. Central Avenue
West Covina: October 24, 6:00-8:00pm, West Covina Senior Center, 2501 E. Cortez Street
Fullerton: November 2, 6:00-8:00pm, Community Senior Multi-Service Center, 340 W. Commonwealth

Vicinity of Cleveland National Forest

Alpine: October 11, 6:00-8:30pm, Alpine Community Center, 1830 Alpine Boulevard
Escondido: October 12, 6:00-8:30pm, East Valley Community Center, 2245 E. Valley Parkway
Ramona: October 18, 6:00-8:30pm, Ramona Community Center, 434 Aqua Lane
San Diego: October 21, 6:00-8:30pm, Balboa Park Club, 2150 Pan-American Road West
Corona: October 27, 6:00-8:30pm, Corona Public Library, 650 S. Main Street
San Juan Capistrano: October 29, 10:00am-1:00pm, Old Fire Station Complex, 31421 La Matanza Street
Fullerton: November 2, 6:00-8:00pm, Community Senior Multi-Service Center, 340 W. Commonwealth

Vicinity of Los Padres National Forest

Salinas: October 11, 5:30-8:30pm, Salinas Community Center (Santa Lucia Room), 940 N. Main St.
Big Sur: October 12, 5:30-8:30pm, Big Sur Lodge Conference Room, Highway 1
Arroyo Grande: October 13, 5:30-8:30pm, South County Regional Center, 800 West Branch Street
Ventura: October 17, 5:30-8:30pm, Avenue Adult Center, 550 N. Ventura Avenue
Goleta: October 19, 5:30-8:30pm, Los Padres NF Headquarters, 6755 Hollister Avenue #150
New Cuyama: October 21, 5:30-8:30pm, Cuyama Elementary School Cafeteria, 2300 Highway 166
Frazier Park: October 22, 10:00am-1:00 pm, Community Center, 300 Park Drive

Vicinity of San Bernardino National Forest

San Bernardino: October 12, 6:00-8:00pm, Danny Rhynes Training Center, 4121 Quail Canyon Road
Twin Peaks: October 13, 6:00-8:00pm, Mtn Communities Senior Citizens Center, 675 Grandview Road
Hesperia: October 19, 6:00-8:00pm, Holiday Inn Express, 9750 Keypoint Avenue
Rancho Cucamonga: October 26, 6:00-8:00pm, Lions Center West, Felipe Room 9161 Baseline Road
Fawnskin: October 27, 6:00-8:00pm, Big Bear Discovery Center, 41397 North Shore Drive, Hwy 38
Idyllwild: November 1, 6:00-8:00pm, Idyllwild Elementary School, Multi-Purpose Rm, 26700 Hwy 243

* This schedule is subject to change. Please check the Forest website for the most current information.

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Southern California Revised Forest Plans

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Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres, and
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