

Errata for Published Documents Southern California Forest Plans Revision

September 2006

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R5-MB-053, April 2004: Atlas of Southern California Planning Maps.

Problem: New decisions are not reflected in alternative 1 through 6 maps.

Resolution: Add Introduction:

LAND USE ZONE CHANGES:

Land use zones were modified in the change from draft to final EIS and Forest Plans. See Part 2 of the Forest Plan, Land Use Zone section, for definitions of each zone.

The zone called Back Country Motorized in the Draft EIS is renamed Back Country in the Final EIS. Back Country and Back Country Motorized are one in the same land use zone, differing in name only. This land use zone is shown in this map packet as Back Country Motorized (BCM) but in the alternative 4a maps in the Final Revised Forest Plan as Back Country (BC). Likewise, discussion in the FEIS will use the terminology of Back Country for this zone.

The Urban Rural Interface and Developed Area Intermix zones are shown separately in this map packet. Because over time during the planning process they had become essentially the same in terms of suitable uses, they are combined into one zone called Developed Area Interface in the final documents. Therefore, the acreage shown in this map packet as Urban Rural Interface and Developed Area Intermix zoning is the same as acreage shown in the alternative 4a maps in the Final Revised Forest Plan as Developed Area Interface. Discussion in the FEIS likewise will use the term Developed Area Interface for all alternatives.

R5-MB-074A: FEIS for the Southern California Forest Plan Revisions, Volume 1.

p. 112. Change “USDA Forest Service 2001” to “Gucinski and others 2001”

p. 357. Correct date. Change “Miller...1997” to “Miller...1998”

p. 420. Replace first two sentences of third paragraph with “Under all alternatives, forest plan direction restricts motorized and mechanized vehicles to National Forest System roads and trails.

R5-MB-074A: FEIS, Volume 1; and R5-MB-074B, FEIS, Volume 2.

Error: Throughout the Final Environmental Impact Statement are references to the Reading Room available on the forest plan revision CD and web site. However, the web site URL noted (www.fs.fed.us/r5/scfpr/read) is incorrect.

Resolution: Insert the correct web site address noted below. To find the Reading Room, the reader should go to:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/scfpr/projects/lmp/>

The reader may then select any published document or any item of interest listed under the Reading Room.

R5-MB-074B: FEIS for the Southern California Forest Plan Revisions, Volume 2.

p. 126. Third bullet should read “Motorized and mechanized vehicle travel would be restricted to National Forest System roads and trails and limited areas that are designated for OHV use (all alternatives).”

p. 332. Correct date. Change “Gucinski...2000” to “Gucinski...2001”

p. 339. Corrections:

First reference to “Marshall...1948” should read “Marshall...1948a”

Second reference to “Marshall...1948” should read “Marshall...1948b”

p. 341 Correct date. Change “Miller...1997” to “Miller...1998”

p. 356. Delete “USDA Forest Service 1001...PNW-GTR-509”

Error: Agency response to comments regarding wildlife management was not included in Appendix M under Natural Resources, page 452.

Resolution: Insert the following text into this section:

APPENDIX M. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND FOREST SERVICE RESPONSE

Natural Resources

Other Natural Resource Concerns

The Forest Service should discuss in the Environmental Impact Statement whether increased soil disturbance, after implementation of the proposed management measures, is anticipated to result in significant changes in the soil over natural conditions. (PC 538)

The questions presented by the commenter pertain more to site and project specific details and are not a part of this strategic level forest plan and FEIS. However, the soil resource is covered in both the Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences sections of Chapter 3 of the FEIS (Effects on Soil). The measures listed in the Effects on Soil section apply to all alternatives and are used as a management tool to prevent unacceptable soil loss from management activities.

The Forest Service should ensure that the Final Land Management Plans and EIS address the potential air quality impacts of future mineral extraction and energy development activities within the forest. (PC 3604)

The revised forest plans are expected to have no effect on valid existing agreements, contracts, claims, or permits; all are expected to continue. Over the life of this plan, forest mineral, energy and sand and gravel extraction rates are expected to remain relatively constant. As emissions from these extraction activities are commonly localized to specific mineral and energy source areas, this type of air quality impact analysis is better prepared when site-specific mineral extraction proposals are received and accepted by the national forests. Their potential air quality emissions were not examined in this programmatic plan for that reason. A list of projects can be obtained from the national forest.

Page 3-10 of the Executive Summary in the section comparing the Alternatives under Air states that, "Management activities would not significantly change the existing air quality at the forest-wide scale in any alternative." This misleading summary conclusion typifies the considerable shortcomings of the DEIS itself. (PC 9995)

The statement "Management activities would not significantly change the existing air quality at the Forest-wide scale in any alternative" is unchanged in the FEIS because we still find it to be accurate. Our reasoning (see FEIS, Chapter 3, Air) is as follows: 1) The strategic level focus of the revised land management plan differentiates it from the standard site specific and area source air quality emission analyses found in most project level plans. The two major sources of air quality emissions over which this agency has some control are recreational vehicle travel mileage and prescribed fire; 2) The maximum difference in estimated mileage occurs between Alternative 4 and Alternative 6 and is approximately 161,000 miles per day (table 234: Estimated Daily Forest Visitor Mileage Driven Within The National Forests of FEIS). Comparing this mileage to the estimated daily mileage driven in the surrounding areas of 472,700,000 miles per day indicates the maximum forest plan change in total mileage driven would be expected to be less than 0.5 percent of the total for the area; 3) The largest air quality criteria pollutant from prescribed fire is particulate matter in the PM-10 size class (table 102: Estimated Annual Wildland Fire Emissions -- tons/year of the FEIS). The maximum difference in PM-10 emissions between Alternatives 1 through 5 and Alternative 6 is approximately 1,100 tons of PM-10 annually (table 101: Air Pollution Control District Significance Criteria of the FEIS). Comparing these emissions to the estimated total PM-10

emissions derived from the surrounding areas of 424,300 tons per year (table 232: Air Background emissions of FEIS), prescribed fire is found to be less than 0.5 percent of the total PM-10 load for the area. We feel that for this planning effort the differences found between alternatives is of no consequence on a forest-wide basis.

Wildlife/Animal Management

Breeding Programs, Stocking, Reintroductions

The Forest Service should coordinate with California Department of Fish and Game regarding fish stocking and non-native fisheries to resolve conflicts with all threatened, endangered, protected, candidate and sensitive species and habitats. (PC 1100)

Please see the San Bernardino National Forest's final forest plan, Part 2, Appendix B, Strategy WL 1 for rewording that refers to coordinating on both fish stocking and nonnative fisheries management.

The Forest Service should consider not restocking streams and lakes with non-native fish. (PC 1110)

Please see the fish, frog and toad species accounts found in the Reading Room on the forest plan revision website or CD. Working closely with California Department of Fish and Game is listed as a conservation opportunity for most, if not all, of them. In addition, please see Part 2 of the forest plan regarding strategies to work closely with State and federal species management agencies regarding fish stocking where there are impacts to species-at-risk.

The Forest Service should clarify the annual needs of acreages for vegetation treatment with respect to backlogged projects. (PC 1192)

You bring up an important point. We now display the total acreage of treatments needed in the Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) in table 534: (Average Annual Hazardous Fuels Program FEIS Forest Health and Vegetation Management section) as well as the annual program of work by each national forest.

Management Indicator Species

The Forest Service should address the effects of the preferred alternatives on Management Indicator Species for the long-term health of mountain lion populations. (PC 618)

Please see Chapter 3 of the FEIS for a revised description of the effects of the selected alternative on mountain lion. See the revised species account for mountain lion located in the Reading Room on the forest plan revision website and CD. The FEIS analysis shows that the selected alternative would not contribute to substantial cumulative effects.

The Forest Service should include bighorn sheep as a management indicator species. (PC 1119)

Please see the Process for Evaluating Management Indicator Species in Appendix B of the FEIS Management Indicator Species Selection Process. The rationale for selecting management indicator species (MIS) and the reasons for each one selected are given in the appendix. We did not select

Nelson's bighorn sheep or Peninsular bighorn sheep as a MIS. Instead we will use mule deer to monitor the effects of Forest Service management on landscape patterns in chaparral age class diversity and habitat linkages. However, monitoring of Nelson's bighorn sheep would occur as part of our collaborative management efforts with the California Department of Fish and Game. The Forest Service would also obtain census data through this collaborative effort with the State.

The Forest Service should reconsider its designation of the mountain lion as a Management Indicator Species. (PC 1163)

We have retained mountain lion as a management indicator species (MIS) because it is the largest remaining carnivore on the southern California national forests and its population trends and distribution will provide information on the quality of large habitat blocks, the status of prey species, and on the functionality of habitat linkages. We recognize that it will be difficult to collect population data; however, numerous studies of lions and populations are currently being conducted on the various national forests. Please see the Affected Environment section of the FEIS and Appendix B (FEIS), which discusses the process for selection of MIS. Mountain lions do affect livestock as has been pointed out; however, the Forest Service has the responsibility to maintain habitat for all native vertebrates, including the mountain lion (CFR 219.19). Livestock depredation has not been substantial enough on the national forests to reduce the effectiveness of livestock to reduce flashy fuels. If it becomes a problem, it can be dealt with through the depredation permit process with the California Department of Fish and Game. Maintaining mountain lions on the national forests is an important goal of maintaining biological diversity.

The Forest Service should consider using negative indicator species, such as cheat grass, to gauge ecosystem health and should consider a goal "to improve species and habitat through management" so that rather than having "preventing listing" as a goal, having "contribute delisting" is the desirable outcome. (PC 1165)

Invasive species are being used to gauge ecosystem health. Please see Goal 6.2 in Part 1 of the forest plans for revised goals related to species conservation. Please see IS 1 in Part 2, Appendix B of the revised forest plans.

The Forest Service should provide further analysis on the viability of all species in the forest, with an emphasis on Management Indicator Species, because the current lack of a comprehensive, science-based process only emphasizes the importance of selecting the alternative that minimizes impacts on at-risk species, and because the current process is subjective, and does not assure that the preferred alternatives would not reduce the populations of at-risk vertebrates below the viability threshold. (PC 1166)

Please see the revised Appendix B of the FEIS for an improved explanation of how species viability was evaluated Species Viability Evaluation Process. See Chapter 2 of the FEIS for a description of the selected alternative (Alternative 4a) and Chapter 3 for a revised description of the effects of all alternatives. The selected alternative is predicted to improve the outcome for many species over the current situation and would not be expected to result in a lower (worse) outcome for any species. The alternative with the greatest number of improved viability outcomes need not be chosen if other alternatives provide a preferred balance of multiple uses. The selected alternative represents what national forests believe to be the best balance of uses and services that will achieve sustainable ecosystems while addressing the issues and concerns that were identified by the public and the Forest Service.

The Forest Service should choose a preferred alternative that ensures the continued existence of the selected MIS species including the mountain lion and mule deer. (PC 1389)

Please see viability outcome statements for species-at-risk in Effects on Biodiversity section, Chapter 3 of the FEIS. Under the selected alternative, the potential risks of cumulative effects are low for the mule deer and mountain lion.

Wildlife Structures (water-holding, barriers)

The Forest Service should address stream crossing and fish passage problems, as well as barriers to migration, as stated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service including preferred crossings, designing new culverts and retrofitting or replacing existing culverts, post-construction evaluation, and long-term maintenance. (PC 1398)

Standard S22 requires that all new linear structures be designed to allow fish passage unless doing so would adversely affect federally-listed species, so no new barriers should be created under the revised forest plans. In Part 2 of the revised forest plans, Appendix B - Program Strategies and Tactics, WAT 1 contains direction to achieve and maintain connectivity of stream channels, which could include taking action through time to retrofit or replace existing culverts that act as barriers to fish movement. Strategy WAT 2 focuses the Forest Service to actively pursue water rights and water allocation processes to secure instream flows sufficient to sustain native riparian dependent resources and to monitor water development projects to ensure that instream flows are meeting riparian dependent resource needs. In Part 1 of the revised forest plans, Goal 5.2 Riparian Condition, the desired condition calls for watercourses that are functioning properly and support healthy populations of native riparian species.

Wildlife/Animals Management

The Forest Service should state which species would be, or are likely to be, adversely affected by each alternative. (PC 617)

Please see final EIS (Chapter 3) for a description of which species would be, or are likely to be adversely affected by each alternative. This information was/is provided in Appendix B of the DEIS/FEIS in tables 368: (Viability Outcomes By Alternative For Plant Species-At-Risk), 371 (Viability Outcomes by Alternative for Vertebrate Animal Species-At-Risk), and 372 (Viability Outcomes by Alternative for Invertebrate Animal Species-At-Risk). Legends have been added to these tables that describe the codes used in the tables.

The Forest Service should consider the impact of development on the mountain lion population and communicate specific plans to provide for their safety and continued survival. (PC 1096)

Please see the species account prepared for the mountain lion (Reading Room) for a discussion of the impacts of development on mountain lion populations. This information was considered in the analysis of cumulative effects, Chapter 3 of the FEIS. The species account also describes conservation practices that can be used to avoid or minimize impacts to mountain lions. Please note that efforts were made to provide for suitable land use zone designations in areas known to be important for mountain lion movement and landscape linkages in the final mapping for the selected alternative. Please see Goals 6.2 and 7.1 in Part 1 of the revised forest plans. These goals include desired conditions to maintain or improve interagency cooperation and wildlife habitat functions,

including migration corridors, and landscape linkages. Please see Strategy WL 1 in Appendix B of Part 2 of the revised forest plans. It is part of this strategy to work with county planners to coordinate development in such a fashion as to avoid or minimize impacts to species of concern including the mountain lion. Please see standard S22 in Part 3 of the revised forest plans. This standard is intended to mitigate impacts to wildlife linkages and corridors, which are one of the limiting factors for mountain lion.

There are no extant steelhead populations known to inhabit streams on the San Bernardino National Forest. The reference to steelhead in Part 2 of the SBNF Strategy-9 should be removed. (PC 1098)

The reference to steelhead populations on the San Bernardino National Forest was an error. This statement has been removed from Part 2 of the forest plan for the San Bernardino National Forest.

The Forest Service should include the unarmored three-spine stickleback and Santa Ana sucker in the species habitat management strategies. (PC 1101)

Please see final San Bernardino National Forest Plan, Part 2, Strategies 23-24.

The Forest Service should reword the statement "Shay Meadow and Baldwin Lake support the only remaining natural population of the unarmored three-spine stickleback (UTS), an endangered fish" to say "Shay Meadow and Baldwin Lake support an imperiled population of the unarmored three-spined stickleback, an endangered fish" because there are other populations of UTS; they are just not on San Bernardino National Forest. (PC 1103)

We concur that this statement was worded incorrectly. The wording has been changed in the Place-Based Program Emphasis section in the Big Bear Place in Part 2 of the forest plan for the San Bernardino National Forest.

The Forest Service should protect critical wildlife corridors and linkages by cooperating with other agencies, designating protective land use zoning, adding wilderness and protecting riparian areas. Specific linkages should be described and effects of alternatives discussed. (PC 1104)

We agree with the need to protect wildlife movement corridors and landscape linkages. The national forests have been involved in this effort for many years. We have been involved in the South Coast Missing Linkages Project since its beginning. We have worked to build protection of important landscape linkages and movement corridors, as well as cooperation with other agencies, throughout the forest plans. We increased emphasis on wildlife, landscape linkages and ecosystem management in the selected alternative (Alternative 4a). Increased emphasis on linkages and corridors, as well as cooperation with others, has specifically been added in Part 1 (Vision), Part 3 (Design Criteria) and in the forest specific Part 2 (Strategies) of the revised forest plans. Areas of the national forests where regional linkages occur have been identified and described as in Part 2 of each forest plan. Place specific strategies and management emphasis on linkages has been added where regional linkages have been identified in public comments and in the South Coast Missing Linkages Project (<http://www.scwildlands.org>). Additional narrative description of linkages has been added to the Places under Setting, Desired Condition, and Program Emphasis. Please see Goals 6.2 (Biological Resource Conditions) and 7.1 (Natural Areas in an Urban Context) in Part 1 of the revised forest plans. Please see Part 2 of the forest plans where it is stated in the program emphasis for wildlife management that, "Habitat loss and fragmentation will be reduced through continued

participation in regional efforts to create and preserve an interconnected open space network." Please see Part 2, Appendix B, WL 2 for a description of the strategies that address wildlife corridors and development in the wildlife urban interface. Please see standard S22 in Part 3 of the forest plan which is intended to mitigate, in part, the effects of rapid growth and development on biodiversity and wildlife corridors. Additional wilderness areas have been recommended. Riparian area management has been strengthened throughout the document, and non-motorized land use zoning has been employed in many areas where needed to help maintain large landscape linkages. In linkage areas that have motorized land use zoning due to essential access needs, the zoning should not seriously detract from the effectiveness of the linkage. The effects of alternatives on landscape linkages have been discussed as part of the management indicator species (mountain lion) effects in Chapter 3 of the FEIS.

The Forest Service should ensure the enforcement of the provisions of the Endangered Species Act to protect threatened and endangered species in the Trabuco District by considering closure of certain areas of the forest if necessary. (PC 1106)

Once a species is federally-listed, the Forest Service is required by the Endangered Species Act to make sure its actions and decisions do not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or adversely affect habitat needed by the species. Forest Service planning regulations also require that land management plans include measures for preventing the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat for threatened and endangered species (1982 Planning Rule, 36 CFR 219.27). Standard S24 requires the Forest Service to mitigate impacts to habitat for federally-listed species. Standard S13 directs the Forest Service to manage Critical Biological Land Use Zones for neutral or beneficial effects on the species therein, which include threatened and endangered species. Standard S34 directs the Forest Service to mitigate impacts of recreation activities on habitat for listed species; mitigation measures can include area closure if needed for species protection. We feel that these standards will adequately protect listed species and their habitats.

The Forest Service should provide a full analysis of all possible impacts to the California condor from anticipated developments in the forest and appropriate mitigation measures because not doing so is a violation of the Endangered Species Act and NEPA. (PC 1109)

The California condor is an important priority for the four southern California national forests. The range of possible impacts for the California condor are specifically discussed in the species account for the condor (Reading Room) and summarized with effects to species-at-risk in the EIS. The species accounts are referenced in Appendix H. See the biological assessment for the revised forest plans for further analysis of the effects of forest plan decisions. The forest plan EIS does not address site-specific projects and impacts since the plans are strategic and do not make site-specific decisions. No developments are permitted by the forest plans. What this means is that any proposal for new development will need site-specific analysis and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries), as appropriate. The primary threats to the condor have been discussed in the Environmental Impact Statement (table: 370 Animal Species-At-Risk). Standards have been written to mitigate impacts, including S-28 and S-11 as well as Appendix H (Species Guidance Summary) and Appendix G (Guidelines for Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Mountain Top Communication Sites).

The Forest Service should specify what survey protocols for new species "at risk" will be required. (PC 1114)

It is not always possible, in terms of funding and time, to gather survey data for all projects that occur in habitat for listed species. In some instances it is possible to complete an analysis of effects by assuming species presence. Direction for conducting surveys for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species is provided for in the Forest Service Manual (FSM 2670) as referenced in Appendix A (Laws, Policies and Other Direction) of Part 3 of the revised forest plans. Reference to FSH 2609.25 was added to Appendix A, under Resource Management, Biological Resources, Wildlife, Fish and Plants, as this handbook provides guidance in respect to the conduct of sensitive plant surveys.

The Forest Service should manage mountain lions for public safety and the welfare of the mountain lions. (PC 1118)

Mountain lions are not managed by the Forest Service but by the California Department of Fish and Game -- under the provisions of California Fish and Game Code Section 4800 Specially Protected Mammal. In 1990, a state ballot initiative (Proposition 117) was passed into law, establishing the California Wildlife Protection Act of 1990 and designating the mountain lion as a "specially protected mammal." This designation generally prohibits the "taking" (hunting or killing), injury, possession, or sale of mountain lions in California. However, provisions of the Act allow for the issuance of depredation permits when a mountain lion (1) is perceived as an imminent threat to public health or safety, (2) damages livestock or other property, or (3) is attacking people.

The Forest Service should implement the recovery plans for federally listed species. (PC 1121)

As a strategic program emphasis, the Forest Service plans to implement provisions of recovery plans appropriate to National Forest System lands (see Part 2 of each forest plan).

The Forest Service should not treat sensitive species as threatened and endangered species because doing so violates the Multiple Use Sustainable Yield Act and the Organic Act. (PC 1124)

Sensitive species are defined by Forest Service Manual (FSM) section 2670.5(19) as: Those plant and animal species identified by a Regional Forester for which population viability is a concern, as evidenced by:

- a. Significant current or predicted downward trends in population numbers or density.
- b. Significant current or predicted downward trends in habitat capability that would reduce a species' existing distribution.

In addition, FSM section 2670.22 requires that the Forest Service:

1. Develop and implement management practices to ensure that species do not become threatened or endangered because of Forest Service actions.
2. Maintain viable populations of all native and desired nonnative wildlife, fish, and plant species in habitats distributed throughout their geographic range on National Forest System lands.
3. Develop and implement management objectives for populations and/or habitat of sensitive species.

When planning activities, FSM section 2670.32 requires, among other things, that the Forest Service:

- a) As part of the National Environmental Policy Act process, review programs and activities, through a biological evaluation, to determine their potential effect on sensitive species.
- b) Avoid or minimize impacts to species whose viability has been identified as a concern.
- c) If impacts cannot be avoided, analyze the significance of potential adverse effects on the population or its habitat within the area of concern and on the species as a whole. (The line officer, with project approval authority, makes the decision to allow or disallow impact, but the decision must not result in loss of species viability or create significant trends toward federal-listing.)

Thus, the Forest Service is required to analyze all activities that could affect populations of or habitat for sensitive species, and it must not make a decision that would result in the sensitive species trending toward federal-listing -- direction that is indeed very similar to requirements for federally-listed species. This would include decisions on whether or not to allow rebuilding of recreation residences that have been destroyed by fire or flood or to reissue permits for recreation residences. The revised forest plans do not make any decisions regarding recreation residences - that will be done later by site-specific analysis, in which the presence of sensitive species, along with listed species, and many other factors would be considered. There is no "policy" in the revised forest plans that automatically eliminates recreation residences or any other activity from sensitive species habitat.

The Forest Service should provide viability outcome studies/statements for all threatened, endangered, protected, candidate and sensitive species, but at a minimum to include those in Threat Category 4; also, the Forest Service should reconsider the restriction of viability outcome analyses for plants in Threat Category 5 because there is no way for the public to use this document to evaluate potential impacts to or viability of other plants and their habitats. (PC 1125)

Species identified in the species accounts as being in Threat Category 4 (or lower) were determined not to be at risk from Forest Service activities under all alternatives by the Forest Service analysis team. This was stated in the species accounts for animal species of concern, but was inadvertently omitted in the plant accounts. Language clearly stating that viability outcomes for these species would not vary among alternatives has been added to the accounts for all plant species of concern in Threat Category 4, including listed and sensitive species. The species accounts are included in the Reading Room on the CD and website for the revised forest plans.

The Forest Service should adopt all feasible measures to conserve the southern steelhead trout because failure to do so is in violation of the Endangered Species Act and National Forest Management Act. The Forest Service should consider preparing a more complete and realistic steelhead trout viability analysis with an outcome as an "E" not a "D", as they are currently given, because they appear to meet this classification. (PC 1126)

Please see the Los Padres and Cleveland National Forest's final forest plans, Part 2, regarding emphasis areas for species management over the next three to five years. In addition, please see the steelhead trout species account in the Reading Room for a full description of the status of steelhead populations on National Forest System lands, beyond National Forest System lands, and the threats and conservation considerations.

Steelhead trout (two stocks found on southern California National Forest System lands) are federally listed as 1) a threatened species, in the case of the south-central California Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU) and 2) a endangered species, in the case of the southern California ESU. In general, these two different stocks of steelhead trout are discussed together in the final forest plans and EIS. However, each of these stocks were discussed in the steelhead species account and were considered separately during the viability evaluations. Please see Appendix B of the EIS that describes the viability evaluation process and the species account that describes the viability outcomes for both steelhead stocks. In the final EIS, south-central California ESU stocks received a “D” viability outcome status, and the southern California ESU stocks received an “E” viability outcome status, on National Forest System lands.

One of the primary reasons for the "E" viability outcome status for the endangered southern California stocks is due to the loss of the ability for steelhead to reach historic habitat upstream of dams and dewatered/channelized segments of many miles of stream channels throughout southern California. This situation has resulted in what many believe is the eminent danger of extirpation for the endangered southern California steelhead. This most likely could occur regardless of habitat management on National Forest System lands. Relatively speaking, effects from Forest Service project level activities could be considered small, and of short-term duration, compared to the overall loss of access to natural rivers throughout this species historic range. Resolution of the fish passage problem due to these types of water management situations is not a forest plan decision and would not change by alternative. It is important to point out that threatened, endangered and sensitive species are considered during site-specific analysis of new proposed projects. Biological assessments and/or biological evaluations are prepared, and consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) – in the case of steelhead – is conducted as needed.

Because of our overarching strategies to move towards recovery of threatened and endangered species found on National Forest System lands (Part 1, forest plan), our program emphases in anadromous fish watersheds by Place, and our strong resource protection standards (Part 3, forest plan); riparian areas, streams and aquatic habitat will be managed in a way that should assist in their movement towards the desired condition.

The Forest Service should consider conservation, improvement and management of contiguous chaparral habitats in the forest to help meet the goals and objectives of the Partners in Flight program. (PC 1127)

We are cooperators in the Partners in Flight program and do what we can to promote its objectives in chaparral and other habitats represented on the national forests. We have included a strategy (WL 2) in Part 2 of the forest plans to specifically call out the partnership with Partners in Flight. The wilderness recommendations and other land use zoning should help move towards the desired condition.

The Forest Service should emphasize the conservation of ecological processes associated with natural disturbance regimes and management of bark gleaning birds to preserve habitats for cavity nesting birds and other snag-dependant birds. (PC 1130)

The forest plan revision has focused on returning fire adapted plant communities to a more natural state with more natural fire regimes. Forest health is a big part of the emphasis (see Desired Condition in Part 1). Goal 1.2.1 discusses reducing the potential for stand-replacing wildfire as a result of fire exclusion. Restoration of a more natural fire regime over large acreages of forests

should result in preserving habitats for the species you are interested in. The snag forest plan standard (S14) which calls for a minimum of 10 to 15 hard snags per five acres would result in a substantial number of snags in varying degrees of decomposition.

The Forest Service should include discussions of the California gnatcatcher, unarmored threespine stickleback and the California condor in the Management of Species of Concern section because the current strategies are inconsistent in terms of the species addressed. (PC 1133)

We apologize for these omissions. The species mentioned have been added to strategy section of Part 2 of the Angeles National Forest plan.

The Forest Service should consider available means, other than wilderness designation, to ensure that the Sugarloaf Inventoried Roadless Area continues to support habitat for those species that have demonstrated an inability to survive in less than primitive surroundings. (PC 1134)

In the selected alternative, the San Bernardino National Forest did not recommend the Sugarloaf Inventoried Roadless Area for wilderness designation. However, Wildhorse Research Natural Area (located to the east of the Sugarloaf Inventoried Roadless Area) is recommended for designation. This RNA would help protect the ashy grey paintbrush and other listed meadow plants.

In regards to protection of carbonate species, the national forest zoned a small portion of Bertha Ridge as a Critical Biological Zone. Also, the national forest will work with the mining industry to protect carbonate endemic plants through implementation of the Carbonate Habitat Management Strategy.

In regards to protection of pebble plain and carbonate species, the national forest recommended the following RNAs:

Arrastre Flat (pebbleplain)

Blackhawk (carbonate)

Wildhorse (pebble plain and meadow species)

The Conservation Strategy for the California spotted owl on the national forests of southern California will help provide protection for the California spotted owl.

Most of the area in the Sugarloaf Inventoried Roadless area has been designated Back Country Non-Motorized or Back Country Motorized Use restricted, which should maintain the unroaded character of Sugarloaf. This should provide the protection you described for the habitat of these various species.

The Forest Service should conduct Gap Analysis on all threatened, endangered, protected, candidate and sensitive species in the Los Padres National Forest to include long-term analyses that will better guide subsequent planning. (PC 1136)

A Gap Analysis was done with habitats. See the habitat groups and associated species identified in the Mountains and Foothill Assessment. We looked at all the species-at-risk in relation to the land use zone decisions in the biological assessments submitted to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). We found that oak woodlands and grasslands including montane meadows are under represented on National Forest System lands. This information can be found in the effects on vegetation section in the FEIS.

The Forest Service should provide the community with maps of imperiled species to avoid further impacts on the habitat. (PC 1139)

Please see Reading Room, Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis for a listing of the maps used. The actual maps are in the project record in electronic format.

The Forest Service should mandate that candidate and sensitive species receive the same protection of their viability that threatened, endangered and protected species do because to exclude them from desired conditions designed to conserve habitat and species viability would be a clear violation of the Forest Service Manual and the National Forest Management Act. (PC 1141)

Desired condition statements have been rewritten in the revised forest plans. Under Goal 6.2, "Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species," the desired condition includes a statement that habitat for sensitive species and other species of concern is managed to prevent downward trends in populations or habitat capability and to prevent federal-listing. As noted in a previous response, the Forest Service is required by Manual direction to analyze the effects of new activities on sensitive species before conducting such activities; this direction need not be repeated in the forest plan to assure that such analysis will occur. In the Design Criteria (Part 3 of the revised plans), Standard S34 requires mitigation of the negative effects of recreation activities on threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive (TEPCS) species. Standard S11 prescribes consideration of provisions of species guidance documents when projects are proposed in habitat of TEPCS species in order to minimize impacts to the species or their habitat. Standards S43 and S44 provide guidance for minimizing the effects of mining on TEPCS species. These standards provide broad protection for candidate and sensitive species in addition to those proposed or listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. In addition, candidate species are covered by the provisions of standards S12 and S31.

The Forest Service should survey and analyze whether there is sufficient habitat to sustain various species in the region under the varying alternatives including threatened, endangered, and sensitive species as well as wide varying species such as cougar, bobcat, California condor and bighorn sheep. (PC 1142)

Please see Chapter 3 of the FEIS for an analysis of the adequacy of habitat to sustain native plants and animals. The FEIS summarizes data found in the species accounts. Please see the Reading Room for species accounts for mountain lion, California condor, Nelson's bighorn sheep, and Peninsular bighorn sheep. We did not prepare a species account for bobcat, as we have no indication that this species is at risk. Please see the species accounts in the Reading Room for information on the status of our knowledge regarding the distribution and abundance of species-at-risk. These species accounts also analyze whether there is sufficient habitat to enable each species to persist into the foreseeable future.

The Forest Service should clarify the definitions of "threatened, endangered, proposed and sensitive species" (TEPS) and the term TEP. (PC 1144)

Clear definitions of these terms are found in the Glossary of the forest plans (Appendix L) and FEIS (Appendix J). The use of acronyms in the forest plans and FEIS has been greatly reduced for clarity.

The Forest Service should follow through with its attempts to protect migratory birds and threatened and endangered species with respect to the "Guidelines of Construction, Maintenance and Operation of Mountain Top Communication Sites." (PC 1145)

These guidelines are included in revised forest plans (see Part 3, Appendix G).

The Forest Service should conserve all known populations and suitable habitat for the arroyo toad. The Forest Service should reconsider its conservation standards for the arroyo toad because current standards are inadequate to conserve species and additional Critical Biological land use zones. (PC 1147)

Please see the arroyo toad species account (Reading Room) for a description of this species current and anticipated conservation status and Appendix B of the FEIS for the species viability evaluation process. In addition, please see revised land use zoning maps for the selected alternative (Alternative 4a) that includes areas of arroyo toad habitat in the Critical Biological (CB) land use zones. Even outside of CB zones, any new activities proposed in or near riparian habitat, including habitat for the arroyo toad, would utilize standard S47 for delineation of riparian conservation areas (RCAs) adjacent to water features and riparian areas (see forest plan, Part 3, Appendix E - Five-Step Project Screening Process for Riparian Conservation Areas). This standard not only protects the riparian areas, stream channels and water quality, but also can provide protection and enhancement of habitat for threatened and endangered species. Additional standards that are beneficial to arroyo toads and their habitat include standards S11, S13, S24, S25, S34, S35, and S48, to list a few. Please see the entire revised standards package found in Part 3 of the forest plans for other resource protective standards.

In addition, a biological assessment was prepared to analyze the effects of the revised forest plans and provided to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for consultation. This agency has issued a biological opinion for the selected alternative.

The Forest Service should address the fine-scale microhabitat requirements of the southwestern willow flycatcher, Laguna Mountain skipper and the least Bell's vireo and the structural characteristics of the vegetation necessary for their breeding. (PC 1150)

The fine-scale microhabitat requirements are discussed in the species accounts for these species, which are found in the Reading Room. Additional discussion of the scientific literature regarding grazing in southwestern willow flycatcher and least Bell's vireo habitat has been included in the species accounts. Standard S11 requires that Appendix H - Species Guidance Summary, including species accounts and recovery plans, be used to develop activity design criteria such as permitting grazing in southwestern willow flycatcher and least Bell's vireo habitat. There is very little grazing occurring in habitat for these species and the grazing standards we are proposing should provide the structural components needed by these species. Standard S56 (Part 3 of the forest plan) has been modified to preclude grazing in occupied habitat during the nesting season and to require monitoring of utilization standards in potentially suitable habitat that is grazed outside the nesting

season. The proposed utilization standards (S56) are consistent with those recommended in the southwestern willow flycatcher recovery plan. Monitoring will be conducted as part of allotment administration to ensure that utilization levels maintain suitable fine-scale microhabitat requirements. Permittees are required to comply with the utilization standards as per the terms and conditions of the permit.

Forest Service should consider prohibiting activities that provide feeding areas for cowbirds, such as grazing, within a five-mile radius of southwestern willow flycatcher and the least Bell's vireo populations or in areas targeted for restoration of populations and habitat. (PC 1152)

Consideration was given to this aspect of willow flycatcher biology and nest predation. The national forests have eliminated grazing or restricted season of use in most of the habitat that is suitable for flycatchers and vireos. Farmer (pers. comm.) found cowbird abundance in the central coast of California (Los Padres National Forest) to be extremely low. In his opinion, there were so few cowbirds present that parasitism was not a significant threat.

As a result of recent grazing biological assessments and biological opinions on the Cleveland and San Bernardino National Forests, grazing has been modified and cattle have been excluded from areas of high potential for nesting. Precluding cattle from grazing within five miles of occupied habitat has not been proposed or recommended in recent biological assessments or biological opinions related to grazing on the national forest. It is also not a recommended action in the least Bell's vireo or southwestern willow flycatcher recovery plans. As a result of the recent settlement agreement with the Center for Biological Diversity, we have conducted research on the Los Padres National Forest to help determine the relationship to livestock grazing. Relative to other regions in the U.S., the Los Padres National Forest appeared to have low densities of cowbirds along with low densities of livestock. Results from 2002 showed that: cowbirds were uncommon; cowbird distribution was not associated with livestock locations, livestock grouping, or distance to livestock; passerine richness and the amount of urban areas within 1 km (.6 mi.) were the strongest factors associated with cowbird presence. The results indicated that cowbird locations and livestock locations have almost nothing to do with each other. In fact, cowbirds were more likely to be absent from allotments. In 2003, the study area was expanded to include greater area nearer the coast and off-forest. Results from 2003 have not been fully analyzed (Uyehara pers. comm.).

The four southern California national forest riparian bird surveys were conducted at about 200 stations during the years of 1988 - 1997. During this period, cowbird abundance decreased on National Forest System lands. Cowbirds were only detected at about 25 percent of the stations (Uyehara pers. comm.).

Standard S55 has been added to require evaluation of new concentrated livestock areas within five miles of occupied least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher sites to determine if such action will increase brood parasitism by cowbirds.

The Forest Service should explain why more protective standards could not be given to protect the southern rubber boa because logging operations can cause direct mortality and degrade and/or fragment habitat. The Forest Service should follow the guidelines from the Department of Fish and Game regarding protection of down logs, rocky outcrops, brush piles, sensitive species' identification, handling, and the appropriate notification upon discovery. (PC 1153)

We believe that use of the species management guide and standards as proposed will provide adequate protection for this species and yet allow essential fuels and forest health treatments. Standard S11 directs new projects to consider species guidance documents (Appendix H-Species Guidance Summary) to develop project-specific or activity-specific design criteria. Both the species account for the southern rubber boa (see Reading Room) and the San Bernardino National Forest Species Management Guide for the southern rubber boa are included in the species guidance documents. The species management guide and the down log standard (San Bernardino National Forest, Part 2, S4) have been used for many years to guide management on the San Bernardino National Forest. The species management guide and down log standards were jointly developed with the California Department of Fish and Game and the Southern Rubber Boa Advisory Committee. The recently developed "Southern Rubber Boa Avoidance Measures for Removal of Dead, Dying and Diseased Trees" has been incorporated into the southern rubber boa species account and will be used to design projects.

The Forest Service should consider a "limiting operating period" of February 1 through August 15 for the California spotted owl even if they are not nesting. (PC 1154)

A limited operating period (LOP) even if nesting was not taking place was considered. With the critical need to conduct fuels and forest health treatments as a result of years of drought and fire exclusion, prohibiting treatment when nesting is not occurring is not in the best interest of the species or public safety. Limiting the window available for vegetation treatment increases costs and can result in less habitat being properly managed than is desirable for the species. The Conservation Strategy for the California spotted owl (Appendix H) provides for numerous protection measures in addition to the LOP.

The Forest Service should consider broadening the "wildlife and fisheries management goals" to include more than threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species. (PC 1155)

In Part 1 of the revised forest plans, Goal 6.2, Biological Resource Conditions, contains desired conditions for all native and desired nonnative wildlife and plants, not just species-at-risk (threatened, endangered, and so forth). In Part 2 of the revised forest plans, Appendix B, Objective WL 2 seeks to improve habitat for all wildlife, fish and plant species.

The Forest Service should emphasize the preservation of remaining biological resources in the national forests including ensuring that proposed recreation and other uses for the forest are consistent with protecting remaining biological resources. (PC 1156)

The revised forest plans will protect biological resources through forest plan Goals (2.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.2 and 7.1, in particular), Strategies (WL 1, WL 2, IS 1, WAT 1, WAT 2, and LINK 1, in particular), and Standards. The emphasis of the selected alternative is on allowing sustainable recreation and other uses while protecting biological diversity.

The Forest Service should demonstrate how it will ensure viability and/or recovery of federally listed species and/or decrease the need to designate sensitive species. (PC 1157)

The process for evaluating viability of all species of concern, including federally-listed and sensitive species, is described in Appendix B of the FEIS. Species accounts for these species included in the Reading Room (available on the forest plan revision CD and website) contain an evaluation of the threat posed to the species from Forest Service activities and how well those threats would be

mitigated under the various forest plan alternatives. A number of standards (see Part 3 of the revised forest plans) direct the Forest Service to avoid or mitigate effects to listed and/or sensitive species when conducting new or ongoing activities. The species accounts also have a description of conservation measures that can be considered at the project level to mitigate impacts from projects and activities. The projected effects of the selected alternative at a programmatic level on federally-listed species were described in biological assessments that were submitted to National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Biological opinions have been received.

The Forest Service should reconsider the designation of the unarmored three-spine stickleback as a threatened and endangered animal with no substantial threats to persistence or distribution from USFS activities because the San Bernardino National Forest currently permits water withdrawals that adversely affect their occurrence at Shay Pond. (PC 1158)

There are separate species accounts for unarmored three-spine stickleback (UTS) and the UTS population found in the Shay Creek area. For this highly isolated population, there were not any land use zoning or associated suitable use forest plan decisions that would vary by alternative. Project level, site-specific environmental analysis will be conducted for any new proposals and would incorporate utilization of our desired conditions, strategies, design criteria and standards.

The Forest Service should coordinate with water management agencies responsible for habitat blockages and instream flow alterations to provide steelhead access to national forest streams and to contribute to species recovery. (PC 1159)

Please see Los Padres National Forest final forest plan, Part 2, Strategies, as well as Place descriptions for Figueroa-Santa Ynez and Highway 33 Places regarding strategies for working together with other agencies and groups for fish passage at Bradbury and Matilija Dams.

The Forest Service should reevaluate and expand the number of management indicator species (MIS) to include a full range of species that demonstrate ecosystem health and represent all biological communities and habitat types, including adding: herbaceous species to monitor grassland and meadow health, fish species or invertebrates, federally listed species, and shrub species. (PC 1169)

Please see the revised Appendix B in the FEIS for description of the process used in selecting management indicator species (MIS) (Management Indicator Species Selection Process). The planning statute and regulation (CFR 219.19, 1982) established no minimum or maximum number for MIS and provides only that listed species should be considered for inclusion. In addition, the regulations do not contain a requirement that all biological communities must be represented by a MIS. A key consideration for selection was whether a prospective MIS could be efficiently and effectively monitored. Many biotic communities will be monitored using other types of indicators. For example, grassland and meadow health will be monitored using rangeland condition and trend transects.

Please see Appendix B of the FEIS. The appendix has been revised to clarify the intent of using arroyo toads as a MIS. Also, in the revised Appendix B of the FEIS you will find the rationale as to why blue oak, Engelmann oak, and valley oak were selected as MIS. Rainbow trout were considered for designation as MIS but were not selected.

The Forest Service should provide habitat and water conservation and reduction of non-native, invasive species to preserve species. (PC 1172)

The selected alternative (Alternative 4a) has been strengthened to protect the resources mentioned in your letter. Please see Goals 2.1, 5.1, 5.2, and 6.2 in Part 1 of the forest plans, and Strategies (IS 1, WL 1, WL 2, WAT 1 and WAT 2) in Appendix B in Part 2 of the forest plans for management of these resources. Also in the forest plans, Part 3, see the southern California national forest's Weed Strategy located in Appendix M.

The Forest Service should consider the continued protection of the bald eagle nesting site within the Garner Valley Place because nesting in that area is a rare event. (PC 1177)

Reference to the bald eagle nesting at Lake Hemet has been included in Garner Place. Standards S12, S14, S15, and S27 will be applied to bald eagle habitat in Garner Valley as well as other occupied habitat.

The Forest Service should clarify whether "no substantial threats from forest activities and uses" refers to the existing condition rather than the condition after the Proposed Action has been implemented. (PC 1181)

Determinations of threat status were made with full consideration given to the Proposed Action. This has been stated more clearly in Appendix B, Species Viability Evaluation Process, of the FEIS.

The Forest Service should clarify Species and Habitat Viability Ratings. (PC 1186)

The FEIS has been rewritten to clarify species viability outcomes. Appendix B of the FEIS includes a revised description of the process used to evaluate threats to species and develop species viability outcomes Species Viability Evaluation Process. We did not produce habitat viability ratings in either the draft or final EIS.

The Forest Service should provide documentation of acceptable sound levels for wildlife protection. (PC 1189)

It is impossible to document acceptable sound levels for wildlife due to the variety of wildlife species, the differing effects of noise on various species during different parts of their life cycle, and the lack of research into this topic. Some industry standards are being developed and are evolving for a small number of species and a few activities, such as highway construction and breeding southwestern willow flycatcher. Therefore, as projects and activities are proposed, noise constraints may be incorporated based on the specific species and the activity on a project by project basis. We suggest reading Chapter 8 in "Wildlife and recreationists: Coexistence through management and research" by Richard L. Knight and Kevin J. Gutzwiller, 1995.

The Forest Service should implement a strategy to restore Nelson's bighorn sheep. (PC 1193)

The San Bernardino and Angeles National Forests have signed the Implementation Strategy to Restore the San Gabriel Mountains Bighorn Sheep Population. This strategy has been incorporated into the forest plan, Part 3, Appendix H (Species Guidance).

The Forest Service should proactively work to protect and restore habitat and species, including listed species and critical habitat. The Agency should facilitate the free movement of animal species through plant communities and conduct annual surveys for listed species to identify additional critical biological areas and restoration opportunities. (PC 1218)

The forest plans contain desired conditions and goals (Part 1), strategies (Part 2, especially in Appendix B, strategy WL 1), standards (Part 3), and monitoring (Parts 1, 2, and 3) all designed to protect wildlife, plants and natural ecosystems. The selected alternative (Alternative 4a) was developed through modifications to the preferred alternatives and should provide protection of species and ecological processes (see Chapter 2 of the FEIS for a description of the selected alternative (Alternative 4a (selected))). A reduction in zoning that allows motorized public access should benefit species dependent on lack of human disturbance and larger blocks of undeveloped land. The resulting land use zoning should also benefit species needing linkages to adjacent wildlands. The selected alternative represents what Forest Service managers believe to be the best balance of uses and services for sustainable ecosystems while addressing the issues and concerns brought forward during the public comment period and internal review between the draft and the final forest plan and EIS.

The species accounts for species-at-risk (available in the Reading Room on the forest plan revision CD and website) include descriptions of pertinent information about the species to the extent that the information was available. We have used a combination of land use zone designations and forest plan goals, objectives, and standards as a strategy for providing for the protection of proposed and listed species. For federally-listed and candidate species, this strategy and its effects are described in the biological assessments for the revised forest plans that were submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (most terrestrial species) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) (steelhead trout and Stellar's sea lion). See the biological opinions on the Forest Service website or as part of the project record.

The Forest Service should include priority research and management of the coastal sage scrub that could support the Smith's blue butterfly. (PC 1224)

This subject is not identified in the forest plan for the Los Padres National Forest as a specific research topic, but AM 2 in Appendix B, Part 2 of the forest plan identifies species-specific habitat use research in general as a priority. Research on effects of invasive species on threatened and endangered species is also a priority.

The Forest Service should ensure it includes a complete list of endangered and threatened species by forest. (PC 1225)

Federally-listed species and Forest Service sensitive species are identified by national forest in Appendix B of the FEIS, tables 361 (Federally Listed Plant Species - Endangered, Threatened, Proposed or Candidate), 362 (Federally Listed Animal Species - Endangered, Threatened, Proposed or Candidate), 363 (Sensitive Animal Species by Forest (known or potential)), and 364 (USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region Sensitive Plant Species by Southern California National Forest). Tables 360 (Plant Species Evaluated for Viability Concerns (Species of Concern)) and 369 (Animal Species Evaluated for Viability Concerns (Species of Concern)) include State-listed species. Six new tables have been created to show federally-listed and Forest Service sensitive species viability outcomes by alternative.

The Forest Service should reconsider the statement under the Viability Assessment Methods, "Recent Washington Office policy decisions regarding the adequacy of species viability assessments required for forest planning will be on our basis for conducting species viability assessments." A) Because these policy decisions are determined to bring a deterioration in habitat rather than actually protect the viability of species. (PC 1387)

Appendix B of the FEIS includes a revised description of the processes used to analyze threats to species and determine species viability ratings (Species Viability Evaluation Process). The statement has been deleted in the description. Instead, we include a list of some other viability assessment examples we consulted for guidance.

The Forest Service should identify the location of species that may need protection. (PC 1394)

The national forests have been doing a substantial amount of survey work in the last few years. Surveys for threatened, endangered and sensitive species have been listed as a Strategy in Part 2 of the forest plans under Forestwide Inventory AM 2. Identified needs for research are also described in the same location.

The Forest Service should address the biological significance of the southern California region. (PC 1413)

The selected alternative (Alternative 4a) contains less acreage in the Back Country zone and correspondingly more in Back Country Non-Motorized and Back Country Motorized Use Restricted than the preferred alternatives in the draft revised forest plans (see tables in Chapter 2 of the FEIS). This zoning more closely reflects current land use patterns that would continue during the next 10 to 15 years. In addition, more acres are included in Critical Biological land use zones for protection of at-risk species than were in Alternative 4. In the associated comment, the letter writer misinterpreted tables 113: (Number of Animal Species of Concern in Each Threat Category) and 114: (Number of Plant Species of Concern in Each Threat Category) in the DEIS. The tables identify how many species are in Threat Categories 1 through 6, defined in Chapter 3 of the FEIS and in Appendix B, under current conditions and with all alternatives in mind. The tables do not show numbers of species "threatened" by each alternative. New captions for the tables have been written to make this clear in the FEIS.

The Forest Service should propose a mechanism to manage numerous uncertainties related to the implementation of the proposed action and related Forest activities including the specific location where activities will be implemented; the type and amount of habitat that would be affected; the type, amount and duration of adverse effects to steelhead; the effectiveness of avoidance compensation and type and amount of allocated compensatory mitigation; the effectiveness of monitoring; and the performance of avoidance and compensatory mitigation. (PC 1414)

Potential and suitable habitats for southern California and south-central California steelhead trout occur in all types of land use zones. There are many authorized uses that have no substantial impact on the habitat of this species, especially unoccupied habitat. We have used a combination of land use zone designations and forest plan goals, objectives, and standards as a strategy for providing for the protection of habitat. This strategy and its effects are described in the biological assessment for steelhead trout in the Los Padres and the Cleveland National Forest's revised forest plans. This biological assessment describes how the revised forest plans would not jeopardize the continuing

existence of steelhead in the planning area. The biological assessment is available on the forest plan revision website.

The Forest Service should implement all relevant portions of the Peninsular bighorn sheep recovery plan and apply those standards to other populations of bighorn sheep elsewhere in the national forests, if applicable. (PC 1416)

We have reviewed and incorporated applicable standards such as grazing of sheep and goats within nine miles. The Strategy to Restore the San Gabriel Mountains Bighorn Sheep Population has recently been approved and is incorporated into the forest plan as Species Guidance, in Appendix H.

The Forest Service should reconsider the inclusion of vernal pool monitoring because of the low potential for vernal pool habitat on the forest. (PC 1417)

We concur; this was an error. Vernal pool monitoring was deleted from the forest plan for the San Bernardino National Forest.

The Forest Service should address whether habitat defragmentation goals are reasonably partitioned between Alternatives because the preferred alternative increases habitat fragmentation. An area of concern is the National Forest linkage to the Wind Wolves Wildlife Preserve. (PC 4057)

Please refer to the selected Alternative 4a map. The Mt. Pinos Place now contains less of what was formerly Back Country Motorized (now called Back Country) and has substituted a band of what is now called Back Country Motorized Use Restricted to the north. This new emphasis on restricted motorized use will enhance habitat linkages with the Wind Wolves Wildlife Preserve. See also the Place descriptions for Mt. Pinos Place and the Hungry Valley/Mutau Place, which address specifically the management emphasis on habitat linkages. We have made similar changes throughout the forest plan under the selected alternative (Alternative 4a) to better reflect our desire to maintain a sustainable transportation system, but not create heavily roaded areas. The amount of roads we are considering in the selected alternative should not result in substantial fragmentation of areas that are currently not fragmented.

Error: List of recipients - Libraries, page 608

Resolution: Insert the following changes to the library list of recipients:

Carpinteria Library (Final Plans Not Maintained At This Location)
Goleta Branch Library (Final Plans Not Maintained At This Location)
New Cuyama Branch Library (Final Plans Not Maintained At This Location)

Libraries, addendum:

Ontario City Library
Ontario City Library
Orange County Public Library
Oxnard City Library
Palm Desert Branch Library

Palm Springs Library Center
Palmdale City Library
Pasadena Central Library
Paso Robles City Library
Perris Branch Library
Pomona Public Library
Ramona Branch Library
Rancho Cucamonga Public Library
Rancho Cucamonga Public Library
Rancho Mirage Public Library
Rialto Branch Library
Riverside Main Library
Robert E. Kennedy Library
Rubidoux Branch Library
Running Springs Branch Library
San Bernardino Valley College Library
San Diego Public Library
San Diego Public Library
San Dimas Library
San Jacinto Branch Library
San Jose Public Library
San Juan Capistrano Regional Library
San Luis Obispo Public Library
San Marino Public Library
San Rafael Library
Santa Barbara Public Library
Santa Cruz Public Library
Santa Maria Public Library
Sierra Madre Public Library
Simi Valley Library
Solvang Branch Library (Final Plans Not Maintained At This Location)
South Pasadena Public Library
Sun City Branch Library
Sunland-Tujunga Public Library
Sylmar Public Library
Temecula Branch Library
Thomas Riveria Library
Thousands Oaks Library
Twentynine Palms Branch Library
University Branch Library
Upland Public Library
Valle Vista Branch Library
Ventura Public Library
Victorville Branch Library
Wrightwood Branch Library
Wrightwood Library
Yucaipa Branch Library
Yucca Valley Branch Library

R5-MB-075: Part 1 Southern California National Forests Vision.

p. 3. Change “A forest plan makes....” to “A forest plan meets...”

R5-MB-076: Part 2 Angeles National Forest Strategy.

Throughout document. Change all references to ROS objective(s) to ROS class(es).

p. 3 Add “including consideration for re-authorization” to the end of the sentence “The suitable uses identified in tables 2.1.1 through 2.1.4 are intended as guidance for consideration of future activities and do not affect existing authorized occupancy and uses or the administrative procedures used to manage them.”

p. 14, fifth paragraph. Change “chapter 8.2, which includes a description...” to “chapter 82.5 and 82.51, which include a description....”

p.18. Replace Table 478 in Part 2 with the following table:

Table 478. Recreation Residence Tracts, Angeles National Forest

Tract Name
Barrett Canyon
Bear Canyon
Big Rock Creek
Big Santa Anita
Big Tujunga (includes Trail Canyon, Stoneyvale, Big Tujunga, Vogel, Trailunga, La Paloma)
Bouquet Canyon
Glacier
Icehouse Canyon
Hughes Lake
Main San Dimas
Manker Flat
McClellan Flat
Millard Canyon
North Fork San Gabriel
San Antonio Falls
San Francisquito
Upper San Antonio
West Fork
West Fork San Gabriel
West Fork San Dimas

p. 38. Replace the Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicator tables in Part 2 of each Land Management Plan with the following table:

Table 2.1.9. Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicators, ANF

Performance Indicator for Aviation and Fire Management	Current Level	Estimated Forest Capability and Need
Acres of Hazardous Fuel Reduction	927	8,650

R5-MB-077: Part 2 Cleveland National Forest Strategy.

Throughout document. Change all references to ROS objective(s) to ROS class(es).

p.5 Add “including consideration for re-authorization” to the end of the sentence “The suitable uses identified in tables 2.2.1 through 2.2.4 are intended as guidance for consideration of future activities and do not affect existing authorized occupancy and uses or the administrative procedures used to manage them.”

p. 6. Corrections:

Developed Area Interface acres and %. Change 40,705 acres or 9.7 percent to 43,107 acres or 10.2 percent.

Back Country acres and %. Change 61,024 or 14.5 percent to 77,064 acres or 18.3 percent

p. 7 Correction, Back Country MUR acres and %. Change 48,582 acres or 11.5 percent to 50,356 acres or 12.0 percent

p. 8 Correction, Back Country Non-motorized acres and %. Change 181,320 acres or 43.1 percent to 161,320 acres or 38.3 percent.

Error: There is a gap shown on page 8 between the Hauser South Recommended Wilderness and the existing Hauser Wilderness on the south end of the map that is not correct. The designated and recommended wilderness boundaries should be mapped the same as correctly shown on the Land Use Zone map on page 2 of Appendix C.

Resolution: Adjust the Inventoried Roadless Area map on page 8 in Appendix C (Part 2 of the Cleveland National Forest Plan) to reflect that the Hauser Wilderness and Hauser South Recommended Wilderness are immediately adjacent. The correct mapping of this area is shown in the Land Use Zone map on page 2 in Appendix C (Part 2 of the Cleveland National Forest Plan).

p. 11, fifth paragraph. Change “chapter 8.2, which includes a description...” to “chapter 82.5 and 82.51, which include a description....”

p. 32. Replace the Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicator tables in Part 2 of each Land Management Plan with the following table:

Table 2.2.9. Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicators, CNF

Performance Indicator for Aviation and Fire Management	Current Level	Estimated Forest Capability and Need
Acres of Hazardous Fuel Reduction	3,500	5,500

p.71. Correction, Agua Tibia Wilderness. Change “Class II” in last sentence to “Class I.”

p. 117. Delete repeat of Strategy Fire 2 – Direct Community Protection.

R5-MB-078: Part 2 Los Padres National Forest Strategy.

Throughout document. Change all references to ROS objective(s) to ROS class(es).

p.5 Add “including consideration for re-authorization” to the end of the sentence “The suitable uses identified in tables 2.3.1 through 2.3.4 are intended as guidance for consideration of future activities and do not affect existing authorized occupancy and uses or the administrative procedures used to manage them.”

p. 11, fifth paragraph. Change “chapter 8.2, which includes a description...” to “chapter 82.5 and 82.51, which include a description....”

p. 34. Replace the Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicator tables in Part 2 of each Land Management Plan with the following table:

Table 2.3.9. Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicators, LPNF

Performance Indicator for Aviation and Fire Management	Current Level	Estimated Forest Capability and Need
Acres of Hazardous Fuel Reduction	6,700	15,400

p.143. Add:

Fire 3 - Fire Suppression Emphasis

Improve wildland fire suppression capability when in proximity to communities or improvements. All human and natural ignitions will be suppressed using control, contain, confine strategies.

- Cross train with other fire agencies to improve suppression coordination and performance on fires burning in the wildland urban interface or developed area intermix.
- During periods of limited firefighter availability, communities within the forest direct protection area should be the highest priority for initial attack coverage.
- Consider protection of sensitive resources, values, and uses during suppression action.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 1- Reduce the risk from catastrophic wildland fire, objective 2.

R5-MB-079: Part 2 San Bernardino National Forest Strategy.

Throughout document. Change all references to ROS objective(s) to ROS class(es).

p. 3. table 2.4.2 Suitable Uses Public Use and Enjoyment, SBNF.

DAI and BC cells in Public Motorized Use off Forest System Roads and Trails row should be replaced with “Not suitable”, because the SBNF has no Designated Open Areas.

p.5 Add “including consideration for re-authorization” to the end of the sentence “The suitable uses identified in tables 2.4.1 through 2.4.4 are intended as guidance for consideration of future activities and do not affect existing authorized occupancy and uses or the administrative procedures used to manage them.”

p. 13, fifth paragraph. Change “chapter 8.2, which includes a description...” to “chapter 82.5 and 82.51, which include a description....”

p.17. table 481. Recreation Residence Tracts, San Bernardino National Forest, add Fish Creek Tract to and delete Big Pine Tract from table.

p. 40. Replace the Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicator tables in Part 2 of each Land Management Plan with the following table:

Table 2.4.9. Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicators, SBNF

Performance Indicator for Aviation and Fire Management	Current Level	Estimated Forest Capability and Need
Acres of Hazardous Fuel Reduction	3,953	10,000

R5-MB-080: Part 3 Design Criteria for the Southern California National Forests.

Error: Standard S58 is listed under incorrect heading.

Resolution: Move S58 from under the heading Soil, Water, Riparian and Heritage Standards “When Implementing Minerals and Energy Activities”, page 13 to under the heading Soil, Water, Riparian and Heritage Standards “When Implementing All Activities”, page 10.

p. 71. Appendix H- Species Guidance Summary

Under 2. Species management guides and strategies, prepared by or for USDA Forest service, delete *Delphinium hesperium ssp. cuyamaca* and *Downingia concolor var. brevior*.

Under 4. Habitat management guides, plans and strategies, prepared by or for USDA Forest Service:

Add the Implementation Strategy to Restore the San Gabriel Mountains Bighorn Sheep Population, September 2004.

Under MOU conservation strategy for coastal sage scrub and interdigitated habitats, after (California gnatcatcher: *Poliptila californica californica*); add “and numerous other special status animal and plant species and their habitats.”

Under 5. Species accounts prepared for this planning effort or subsequent to it (USDA Forest Service). On page 74 under Species account—plants: add *Eriogonum evanidum*.

p. 87. Appendix L. Glossary. Under Best Environmental Design Practices: change “Chavez Wambaugh Protocol” to “Adaptive Mitigation for Recreation Uses (Part 3, Appendix D)”

R5-MB-086-CD: CD - Consolidated Final Documents for Southern California Forests Plan Revision, Reading Room.

(note: the Reading Room is not a NEPA document but is a part of the planning record).

Error: Reading Room, Road Analysis Process. The text contains active, dead links which will generate an error page if a reader is online and attempts to follow a hyperlink.

Resolution: The hyperlinks to the Reading Room on the web site (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/scfpr/projects/Imp/>) will be active, updated, and live for those readers who wish to pursue the hyperlinks.

Error: Reading Room, Road Analysis Process. The CD inadvertently contains the maps and tables from the 2004 draft publications.

Resolution: The Reading Room on the web site contains the 2005 versions of the road analysis maps and tables and a compressed version of the entire road analysis process for download. Maps are available to download individually. Due to the level of detail contained in the maps, these files are large. Therefore, you may request the files be sent to you on a CD. Requests for a Road Analysis Process CD should be sent to: Cleveland National Forest, Attention: S. Eastwood, 10845 Rancho Bernardo Road Suite 200, San Diego CA 92127.

Error: Reading Room, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Analysis section, which lists the map coverages used in the environmental analysis, is missing.

Resolution: The GIS analysis has been added to the Reading Room on the web site.

Inventoried Roadless Areas and Wilderness Evaluations

p. 1. Change “Draft” to “Final.”

p. 248. Change “Nordoff” to “Nordhoff” Inventoried Roadless Area.

Error: On page 256, the Quatal Inventoried Roadless Area wilderness evaluation is incorrectly included under the title “Santa Cruz Inventoried Roadless Area.”

Resolution: Insert the Santa Cruz Inventoried Roadless Area evaluation as follows:

Santa Cruz Inventoried Roadless Area

Los Padres National Forest

Santa Barbara Ranger District

Capability

Environment: The eastern boundary is the McKinley Fire Trail from the point of the current San Rafael Wilderness boundary located 1.5 miles north of the Santa Cruz Guard Station. The eastern boundary continues along the shared southern boundary with the Little Pine Roadless Area into the area known as Happy Hollow and Little Pine Mountain. The boundary continues long the existing road systems of Happy Hollow and Camuesa/Buckhorn Roads (Forest Route 9N11). The western boundary is private property of Rancho San Fernando Rey. The southern boundary includes the system roads of Paradise (Santa Barbara County Road 154) and Upper Oso (Forest Route 5N15). The northern boundary is the McKinley Mountain Road (Forest Route 8N08).

Challenge: This southern portion of this roadless area offers few opportunities for wilderness experiences. The northern portion of this area offers primitive wilderness experiences.

Outdoor Recreation Opportunities: The southern boundary overlaps with the northern boundary for the Lower Santa Ynez Recreation Area. This heavily used recreation area provides high numbers of dispersed visitors into the planning area. There are two overnight campgrounds, two developed trailheads and one picnic area located on the southern edges of the study area. From these developed recreation facilities comes a concentrated mix of varied dispersed user groups. A mix of hikers, backpackers, mountain bicyclists, equestrians, motorcyclists, and all terrain vehicle (ATV) riders comes from Upper Oso Campground and Trailhead. For many of these outdoor enthusiasts, Little Pine Mountain and Happy Hollow is their destination. Happy Hollow dispersed camp is located in the center of this study area. Motorcycle, ATV, and mountain bicycle enthusiasts access Happy Hollow via the designated Camuesa/Buckhorn Off-Highway-Vehicle (OHV) Route and the Happy Hollow Road. A very popular mountain bicycle route is to loop back to Upper Oso Trailhead on the Santa Cruz Trail. Motorcycles and ATV's can continue north beyond the Happy Hollow Road on the Camuesa/Buckhorn OHV route five additional miles to the end of the OHV route at the Bluff gate. Hikers and backpackers access the area on the Santa Cruz National Recreation Trail traveling to Little Pine and backcountry camps beyond. Opportunities exist for dispersed camping along the Santa Cruz Trail at Nineteen Oaks Camp and Little Pine Spring Camp. Aliso Loop National Recreation Trail (Forest Trail 27W09) is located within the unit and connects the Sagehill Group Campground with Upper Oso Campground.

There are 17 miles of multiple use trails within the study area.

Special Features: There are no special features within this roadless area.

Manageability: Inclusion of the northern portions of the Santa Cruz Roadless Area as wilderness would not significantly change current management activities. Much of this area provides primitive wilderness characteristics with no evidence of "man made" features within the area. There are outstanding natural characteristics and vistas from Santa Cruz Peak. This area contains an outstanding example of a large rolling system of mixed grass and oaks. The potrerros of Black's

Canyon are some of the largest in the Forest. Wilderness inclusion would place the remaining three-mile segment of Santa Cruz Creek within wilderness.

The southern areas, including Little Pine Mountain, Happy Hollow, and portions of the Lower Santa Ynez Recreation Area, do not reflect wilderness characteristics because of the existing recreational uses that are currently taking place in this study area. Mountain bicyclists would potentially be removed from 17 miles of trail on six Forest Service system trails. Motorcycles and ATVs could lose access into Happy Hollow. The need to create a motorized corridor within wilderness would need to be considered on Happy Hollow Road to allow continued use by OHVs.

One management trade off would be the loss of the 10.5-mile McKinley Fire Trail. This historical fire access road and associated ridgeline dozer lines is not classified as a road or an inventoried trail. It was last used in 1991 for suppression of the Marre Fire. Hikers to accessing Santa Cruz Peak from McKinley Saddle use the fire trail. Hikers and mountain bicycle riders to accessing Santa Cruz Campground from the south use this fire trail infrequently. The McKinley Fire Trail is used as a loop travel route in conjunction with the Santa Cruz (Forest Trail 27W09) and Mission Pine (Forest Trail 28W01) Trails.

The McKinley administrative road from Cachuma Saddle to its termini at McKinley Saddle is viewed as an important administrative travel route for Forest Service management activities. If this roadless area were combined with the existing San Rafael Wilderness to the north, a road corridor within wilderness would be requested.

Boundary Considerations: Boundary adjustments that would remove the major recreation use areas that currently occur in the area of Little Pine Mountain, Happy Hollow and south to include the overlap with the Lower Santa Ynez Recreation Area would greatly improve suitability for the remaining acres.

Availability

Describe resource demands and uses that the area under evaluation could satisfy: The McKinley fire trail in this roadless area has historically been used for fire suppression activities.

Constraints and encumbrances (SUA's, roads, mining claims): The area in the northwestern corner bordered by the paved portion of the Cachuma Saddle Road and adjacent to Cachuma Saddle Station would not be suitable for inclusion due to the proximity to the Forest Service station and the private residences.

Effect that wilderness designation and management is likely to have on adjacent lands: Posting of boundaries between private and National Forest Land would be necessary.

Need

Location, size, and type of other wildernesses in the general vicinity: The Santa Cruz Roadless Area shares approximately 10 miles of wilderness boundary with the combined wilderness acreage of the San Rafael Wilderness (211,937 acres) and the Dick Smith Wilderness (79,122 acres).

Present visitor pressure on other wildernesses: Visitation in the San Rafael and Dick Smith Wildernesses is considered light to moderate and areas are minimally impacted.

Extent to which non-wilderness lands provide opportunities for unconfined outdoor recreation experiences: A large percentage of the non-wilderness land base on the Santa Barbara Ranger District is designated semi-primitive motorized (SPM) or semi-primitive non-motorized (SPNM) Recreation Opportunity Spectrum classification. Much of the Santa Barbara Ranger District non-wilderness lands encompass similar landscapes and provide opportunities for primitive outdoor experiences.

Ability of certain biotic species to compete with increasing public use and developmental projects that affect their habitats (Consider means available, other than wilderness designation, for meeting this need): This area is adjacent to the Sisquoc-San Rafael Condor Area, which is designated as critical habitat for the California condor, a federally designated endangered species. This special condor area contains historic nest locations and foraging habitat. Use is expected to increase in and adjacent to the condor area as birds re-discover and use the historic nest sites. Currently, the Santa Cruz area is somewhat primitive due to lack of public road access, and its open habitats are the type condors prefer as foraging habitat. Although condors have shown an ability to inhabit developed areas, they are better adapted to primitive conditions. This is especially true for young birds, which are more apt to come in contact with man-made hazards. Young birds learn to forage and otherwise survive in suitable areas near their fledging sites, and as numbers increase, the foraging habitat in the Santa Cruz area will become more important to species recovery.

Need to provide a sanctuary for those biotic species that have demonstrated an inability to survive in less than primitive surroundings or the need for a protected area for other unique scientific values or phenomena: The above comments are pertinent here and can apply to most of the biodiversity of the Santa Cruz area.

Ability to provide for preservation of identifiable landform types and ecosystems: No significant landform or ecosystems have been identified in this unit.

Species Accounts

Error: Scroll to p. 1304 of 1439 in Species Accounts – Animals – Belding’s orange-throated whiptail. The viability outcome tables do not display a column for alternative 4a.

Resolution: Replace the viability outcome sections on p.1304 with the following text:

Belding’s Orange-Throated Whiptail

Viability Outcome for National Forest System Lands

Predicted Outcomes by Alternative

1	2	3	4	4a	5	6
D	C	B	C	C	D	B

Alternatives 1, 2, 4 and 4a should generally have similar effects on the orange-throated whiptail. Fuels treatment should not vary much by alternative. Under Alternatives 3 and 6, there would be more emphasis on biodiversity and land acquisition to create linkages to low elevation, off-Forest

preserves. The Forests would be more involved in working with the other government agencies to implement multi-species plans for Orange, San Diego and Riverside Counties. Under Alternative 5, there would be increased motorized recreation, and mitigation for impacts may be delayed due to the magnitude of the pressure on the Forests.

Viability Outcome For All Lands

Predicted Outcomes by Alternative

1	2	3	4	4a	5	6
D	D	D	D	D	D	D

Habitat destruction is likely the major cause of the decline of Belding's orange-throated whiptail populations. Development in the coastal valleys is projected to continue and the only areas that are not developed will be in the multi-species preserves or on the national forests. However, the Forests have so little habitat, being on the upper limit of the species' range that Forest Service Management is not of great importance to this species except in a few locations. The sum total of effects from on and beyond National Forest System lands is likely to result in a continued decline in distribution and persistence and this probability does not vary by alternative.

Error: Scroll to p. 1088 of 1439 in Species Accounts – Animals – Nelson’s bighorn sheep. A conservation strategy was omitted.

Resolution: On p. 1088 under Conservation Practices add a bullet stating “Implement the September 2004 Implementation Strategy to Restore the San Gabriel Mountains Bighorn Sheep Population.”