

# **NEWS RELEASE**

**U.S. Forest Service  
Inyo National Forest  
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**For Immediate Release**

**September 10, 2013**

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## **Forest Service Announces Streamlined Planning Process**

The Pacific Southwest Region of the US Forest Service has decided to prepare a single Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Forest Plan Revisions for the Inyo, Sequoia, and Sierra National Forests. The forests are implementing the 2012 Forest Service Planning Rule which emphasizes public involvement and collaboration among stakeholders, while gaining efficiencies through a more streamlined process.

The rule focuses on the role of the forest within the larger landscape, with consideration given to all lands throughout the three phases of forest plan revision; assessment, plan development, and monitoring. Currently, the forests are finalizing the assessment phase of the process. Assessment Reports will be completed individually for each forest, as will a separate Forest Plan and Record of Decision.

A combined EIS will provide efficiencies in a number of areas: completing one EIS will be more efficient due to shared landscapes, similar issues, and common stakeholders. Public review and comment periods held during the planning process will be combined for the three forests, allowing the public to consolidate comments applicable to all forests, or to submit comments for individual forests. In addition, a consolidated team will conduct the planning process for all three forests simultaneously.

As well as overlapping landscapes and users, each unit does have distinct issues and opportunities that will be addressed separately for each forest. Forest Supervisor Ed Armenta will remain the responsible official with the responsibility to oversee the planning process and to approve a final plan for the Inyo National Forest.

The Inyo National Forest will schedule public meetings later in the fall to inform interested parties about the Inyo National Forest Assessment Report, which will be released for public review in October and finalized in December 2013. The Assessment Report will be based on the information contained in the 15 resource "topic papers" that were available for public review through September 1st, and will consider the public feedback provided on those topic papers. Initiation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process is expected in early 2014.

For more information about the Inyo National Forest planning process and for a schedule of public meetings, see [www.fs.usda.gov/main/inyo/landmanagement/planning](http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/inyo/landmanagement/planning). Questions can be directed to Susan Joyce at 873-2516 or [sejoyce@fs.fed.us](mailto:sejoyce@fs.fed.us).

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