

San Gabriel Mountains National Monument Management Plan (SGMNM)
Final Environmental Assessment (FEA)
Addendum

Introduction

The following changes and additions are made to the Final Environmental Assessment of the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument Management Plan and hereby incorporated into the final version published in Dec 2018.

1) Page 2 in the FEA: Last sentence under the first paragraph of the Purpose and Need

Explanation: Special status species and rare species definitions are from the 2005 ANF LMP. To clarify, the following paragraph is added to the Purpose and Need.

Change (addition): The ANF LMP was crafted with adaptive management principles and balanced the need for recreational uses and commodity production with protections of ecosystems and special status species' conservation measures. *In the 2005 LMP, the conservation rankings of animals and plants were based on Nature Serve rankings, Federal and State listing status, and any other conservation rankings. This amendment aims to enhance protections of habitat for rare species, including: the current Regional Forester sensitive species, current Federal threatened and endangered species and watch list species, particularly within aquatic ecosystems.*

2) Page 7 in the FEA: Object of Interests

Explanation: The Monument's objects of interest were an issue during the public comment and objection periods. The following change is made into the FEA on page 7.

Change: Objects of Interest – Many comments suggested the Forest Service provide a map and a list or quantification of “objects of interest.” The Forest Service notes that any list and associated map of objects of interest would be continuously evolving, would require staff time well beyond current capacity, and would be of questionable utility. Instead of mapping and quantifying every object of interest, the Forest Service intends to manage protections within the Monument on a landscape scale, ~~by focusing on protecting species' habitat.~~ During this process, the Forest Service made changes to the Monument Plan to enhance broad-scale direction to protect the objects of interest. *A table to list categories of object of interests is added to the final EA and SGMNM monument plan to describe those objects listed in the Monument Proclamation.*

3) Page 7-8 in the FEA: Transportation Plan, addition to the last paragraph

Explanation: clarification is needed about the monument plan transportation plan and the following paragraph is added to the FEA page 7-8.

Change (addition): The Proclamation requirement for a transportation plan is addressed by the Transportation Plan in Chapter 3 of the Monument Plan and in the additional transportation plan

components in Chapter 2 of the Monument Plan, and not solely by completion of Subpart A travel management analysis for the Forest.

4) Page 37-38 in the FEA: West Fork CBLUZ map

Explanation: The following change is made to the FEA page 37-38.

Change (clarification): *Final maps are included in the monument plan. This map in the FEA (page 38) is replaced by the correct one in the monument plan. Description of the location of the West Fork CBLUZ is updated as well in the monument plan.*

5) Page 34 in the FEA: Under CBLUZ designation, additional clarifying language about how the boundary was determined

Explanation: The following paragraphs are added to the FEA on page 34 under CBLUZ designation.

Change (addition):

- *The CBLUZs were spatially delineated based on a number of factors including: land ownership boundaries, surrounding land use zone designations and potential for conflict with land uses and species management, Designated Critical Habitat, known occupancy, survey data, species distribution and abundance, species known behavior patterns, barriers to movement/passage, stream gradient, and the suitability of habitats (i.e. water/habitat availability) were the most important areas on national forest system lands to manage for the protection of species-at-risk. The expansion of the CBLUZs in Aliso Canyon, the North Fork San Gabriel River, and the East Fork San Gabriel River are expected to benefit special status species through increased habitat protection when compared to other land use zone designations.*
- *The Aliso Canyon CBLUZ is being proposed because the population of the California red legged frog within this area was found after the existing 2005 ANF LMP was completed and was not considered during the previous analysis for the 2005 ANF LMP, and the previous land use zone designation did not provide adequate protection for this at-risk species. The boundaries of this CBLUZ were delineated based on land ownership boundaries, existing transmission line rights of way, presence of at-risk species, distribution of the species within the area, water/habitat availability, and known dispersal patterns,*
- *The East Fork and North Fork CBLUZs are being proposed because the Santa Ana sucker (an at-risk species) utilizes free flowing stream channels, unimpeded by dams or other impoundments. These stream features are necessary for maintaining suitable habitat necessary for this species' survival. Within the range of this species, the East and North Fork are some of the few remaining streams that have been relatively unaffected by water withdrawals or large dams or other flood control structures. The West Fork CBLUZ is expanded to provide for connectivity to the North Fork and to include tributaries where Santa Ana sucker have been found. The upper extent of these tributaries were based on suitability of habitat and existing fish barriers. The North Fork CBLUZ boundary was determined based on habitat suitability, stream gradient, existing special use authorization*

boundaries, and designated critical habitat, and surrounding land use designations. The East Fork CBLUZ was based on land ownership boundaries, habitat availability, designated critical habitat, surrounding land use designation, fish barriers and stream gradient.

- *Other locations considered but not proposed for CBLUZ designation include all the known populations of mountain yellow-legged frog. However, currently all the known populations either have existing CBLUZ designations or are within wilderness areas that afford them greater protections than CBLUZs.*

6) Response to comments (appendix D to the Environmental Assessment) – mining management approaches

Explanation: mining was addressed under three management approaches. To follow suggestions from the Regional office about clarifying how new management approaches would be implemented and why they would be effective, the following is added to the response to comments.

Change (addition):

The instruction from the RO is two-fold: 1) why the past attempt is unsuccessful, and 2) how does the Forest implement the new plan direction that can be effective.

- *The illegal mining issue has been ongoing in the Forest for many years, particularly in the East Fork San Gabriel River area. Illegal mining is defined as unauthorized activities that can cause substantial resource damage to streams and riparian habitat. The effects of illegal mining can be long lasting. Mining issues must be approached from a cohesive standpoint across the agency. An interagency collective approach to enforcement is integral to formulating an effective approach to addressing this issue. Limited capacity of both US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and other partners have inhibited previous efforts.*
- *During the Monument Plan planning process, the ANF considered methods to curb resource damage from illegal mining and minerals activities, and plan to collaborate with other agencies that have the capacity and capability to provide increased law enforcement presence. We have, over the years, had preliminary conversations with numerous federal, state, county, and local agencies with experience or interest in natural resource enforcement. We intend to continue these conversations. We will continue to provide information related to our ongoing efforts to develop an agreement with these other agencies. With recent appellate court decisions, the forest sees increased potential for documenting a clear threshold for resource damage. ANF is committed to collaborating with partners and to being a part of a collective solution that will be effective and successful. This plan sets general direction, and the actual process on how to implement is outside the scope of the Monument Plan.*
- *With the expansion of the CBLUZ on the East Fork San Gabriel R, and with the Cattle Canyon EIS, there will be a ban on overnight camping. This provides a tool for a citable offense for law enforcement officers.*
- *Resource damage assessments will be increased by ANF personnel and other concerned organizations.*

The monument plan is clear about “mining is not a suitable use of land” within the Monument. Regarding the illegal mining issue, many objectors aren’t objecting to the plan component itself, but wish to see more concrete action by the Forest Service with a focus. We appreciate the comment, and will be dealing with this issue based on our available staff and funding. Our commitment to resolve this issue in the long run is articulated in the SGMNM monument plan component.

7) Response to comments (appendix D to the Environmental Assessment) - about carrying capacity study

Explanation: on the topic about the carrying capacity study, no timeline was offered in the monument plan planning process.

Change (addition): *In 2005, the ANF along with the other three Southern Province National Forests published the Land Management Plan. In the ANF LMP Part 2, a carrying capacity was described under “San Gabriel Places”. In the 2005 LMP, no timeline was specified. Due to staffing shortages in the Forest and declining recreation budget, no rigorous carrying capacity study has been completed. We recognize that there is a need to conduct such a study, however, no timeline can be offered at this time due to shrinking budget and staff shortages.*

8) Response to Comments (appendix D to the Environmental Assessment) - about land acquisition

Explanation: this topic is addressed in the 2005 ANF LMP. Additional paragraph is included in the Response To Comments document to explain why no additional monument plan components were developed.

Change (addition): *The objector would like to see a detailed description about land acquisition. This issue is not dealt with specifically in the monument plan because the ANF LMP has sufficient language about land acquisition and the priorities in the forest.*

ANF LMP part 2 under LANDS -1 Land ownership adjustment specifically notes:

Consolidate the National Forest System land base to support resource management objectives, improve management effectiveness, enhance public benefits, and/or improve habitat condition and linkage:

- *Acquire lands or interest in lands through purchase, donation, exchange, rights-of-way acquisition, transfer, interchange, and boundary adjustment in order to address the issues associated with complex ownership patterns such as urban interface fire protection and occupancy trespass.*
- *Acquire lands or rights-of-way for road and trail access to support appropriate national forest activities and public needs.*
- *Work with land conservancies, local government, and others in order to secure long-term habitat linkages.*