

Tehipite National Forest Chair May 2016 Report
Submitted by Trudy Tucker, National Forest Chair, Tehipite Chapter

Update on DEIS

On 3/30/16, FS said the DEIS and draft plans would be out in 4-6 weeks (week of May 15th); emerging issues could change this date. Next **Coalition Meeting with F.S. Region 5 Leadership**, July 28, 2016.

Species of conservation Concern Regional Forest Service Leadership Meeting 3-30-16

1) Changes you have made since the January draft SCC list: Forest Service reviewed all our comments; made changes since January, but not willing to tell us what they were; said was always their intent not to address our August 2015 comments until after they shared additional info on rationale.

2) Specific details and rationale for these species: Pacific marten; Northern goshawk; Black-backed woodpecker; & Desert bighorn sheep; FS unwilling to offer details about status of these species.

3) Outreach to agency and non-agency experts and the Department of Fish and Wildlife. We would like the details about outreach on the four species above, as well as outreach for other species: FS did not share what they did for any specific species; reported their engagement of other agencies and species experts was very spotty and variable; could serve as models for the future.

4) Forest Sensitive Species and the draft EIS for the revised forest plans; How will these species be addressed and how will the agency comply with FSM 2670? FS admitted they must comply with FSM 2670 until it is revised; for the DEIS only species that are *federally designated or SCC* will be directly addressed; those Forest Sensitive Species not designated as SCC **will not be addressed** in the DEIS or forest plans; no FS reply when asked how this complies with FSM (Forest Service Manual) 2670.

5) Species analyses: Will species analyses be prepared for each SCC and how will the species analyses be incorporated into the DEIS? FS does not plan to have species analyses draft for each species; will address each SCC and federally designated species in the DEIS, (might be in a grouped fashion; maybe by common habitat types?).

DEIS Public Meetings: FS plans two types of meetings: 1) introduction to documents early in comment period, 2) mid-way a typical feedback session/break out groups. Also planning one round of urban (LA & Bay Area) meetings, a hybrid of the two meetings; for more youth engagement: LA will invite people from LA youth conservation corps & families. Any time during the 90 day comment period, anyone can comment via FS website, email or snail mail.

Sierra Forest Planning Coalition is doing their own urban outreach (maybe helping FS) in LA and San Francisco during the 90-day DEIS comment period.

New FS hire for a key position: Regional Director Ecosystem Management: John Exline began May 1st; he was Deputy Forest Supervisor on San Bernardino NF; Hume Lake District Ranger on the Sequoia NF; and, worked on the Sierra NF at the District and Supervisor's level. John is well versed in Sierra & Sequoia NF issues, needs, and situations, which is a good thing.

National Draft Forest Service Trails Strategy and Focus Sessions

Forest Service's National team developed an internal draft "National Strategy for a Sustainable Trail System" document now out for review and collaboration among the trails community; draft strategies and actions describe what's needed to move to and ensure a sustainable trail system on our national forests and grasslands. Developed shared principles in mind: a set of core values crafted from feedback from "everyone in the trails community": Safety; Sustainability; Workforce; Access; Inclusion; Information; Relationships.

Previewed six major themes it is designed to address:

1. Cultivate methods to help the trails community inspire leadership desire for a sustainable trail system.
2. Engage in a strategic redesign of the Forest Service's trails program to emphasize the skill set and organization needed to manage and maintain a sustainable trail system utilizing current and anticipated agency and partner resources.
3. Work with partners to intentionally appeal to and engage diverse current and potential users, partners, volunteers, and friends.
4. Work with individuals, communities, and partners to develop and share key messages that highlight the

economic and health value of trails.

5. Work with individuals, communities, and partners to create a common vision of a sustainable trail system.
6. Remove barriers that restrict effective partnering and trail management.

FS wants to know:

1. Are we heading in the right direction overall and/or are there any major omissions?
2. Do the draft strategies and actions address the challenges we face and get us to a sustainable trail system?

Document available: <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/trail-management/strategy/index.shtml>

National trail direction info: <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/trail-management/>

Sierra NF Trails Group Development

With the above in mind, the Sierra NF has outreached to "Sierra National Forest trail enthusiasts", sent mainly to OHV groups; to date having had three meetings, the last two to develop a "Steering Committee". The first 3/29/16 Trail Collaboration Steering Meeting attendees: 1 from Back Country Horsemen; 3 from Stewards; 1 from High Sierra Volunteer Trail Crew (HSVTC) [hiking trails]. Chip had heard about the April 12th meeting at the Dinkey Collaborative and attended via the phone. The group led the meeting, which was chaotic and unproductive. Later found out that this

A few key statements from their 3/29 meeting:

Goals of Organization: Seek new recreation opportunities; Stewardship opportunities – give back; Shared resources (tools- people); Guidance to FS; FS participation and other government agencies; Develop new volunteers/inform users of opportunity to volunteer

Questions / Statements: How do we get passionate people to show up and stay engaged within a streamlined organization?; Tell FS which projects are important to organizations; FS hurdles- clearing roads- chainsaw training- CPR- FS rep for events

Ideas for Meeting: Establish steering committee/working group; Strengths and weaknesses for each organization; Not FS driven movement

Need to be involved to participate and to ensure that if this turns into an "advisory group" that they adhere to FACA rules as "steering committee" duties not yet clear. I contacted Sierra NF employee at the meetings asking to be included as a stakeholder to have a voice in this "partnership/collaborative/committee" group.

Follow up letter to December 1, 2015 Enforcement of Travel Management Regulations Meeting with SNF Forest Supervisor Dean Gould

We have not received a reply from Supervisor Gould as promised; I'm crafting a follow up letter. Though he adamantly and repeatedly denied our issue of his preferential treatment of OHV community, e.g. Stewards of the Sierra NF (Stewards), he since announced in a Forest Service public meeting that he "will take care of it", adding three Stewards OHV grants. This incident was part of our State OHV grant comments for the Sierra NF.

A THANK YOU "shout out" to a special volunteers, partners...

A BIG THANK YOU, to the 21 young people (ages 8-19) from across the United States (and climate scientist Dr. James E. Hansen) for filing a landmark constitutional climate change lawsuit against the federal government in the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon. The suit alleges the Federal Government is violating the youth's constitutional rights by promoting the development and use of fossil fuels. April 8, 2016, Federal Court *affirmed constitutional rights of children*, and denied motions of the Government and fossil fuel industry. For more information, donations, etc. go to Our Children's Trust: <http://ourchildrenstrust.org/US/Federal-Lawsuit>