

Tehipite National Forest Chair June 2016 Report

Submitted by Trudy Tucker, National Forest Chair, Tehipite Chapter

Draft Environmental Statement for Forest Plan Revision

The draft environmental impact statement (EIS) and land management plans (forest plans) for the Inyo, Sequoia and Sierra National Forests are available for public review and comment on-line at the Forest Plan Revision project website: <http://tinyurl.com/r5earlyadopters> [A paper copy available for review at our June 8th meeting]

Volume 1 of the draft EIS contains four chapters

- Chapter 1 – Purpose of and Need for Revising the Inyo, Sequoia, and Sierra Land Management Plans.
- Chapter 2 – Alternatives, Including the Proposed Action
- Chapter 3 – Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences
- Chapter 4 – Preparers, Consultation, and Coordination

Volume 2 of the draft EIS contains the appendices

- Appendix A – Timber Suitability and Management
- Appendix B – Wilderness Evaluation
- Appendix C – Wild and Scenic Rivers Evaluation

Volume 3 of the draft EIS contains maps

Chapter 1 of each Forest Plan is an introduction and provides essential information regarding the purpose of the forest plan, how the plan is structured, and what the plan components are.

FS needs **specific comments** on how to **improve the preferred alternative**, what you **prefer in other alternatives**, and anything **you think is missing in the analysis**. *Specific comments* are preferred to help improve the analysis. During the 90-day public comment period: 1) the FS will hold public meetings, tribal forums and a webinar to engage in discussions about documents; 2) comments received during comment period will be considered in developing the final EIS and forest plans; 3) submit comment(s) only once through one of the following:

- Project web-site comment form: <http://tinyurl.com/r5earlyadopters>
- US mail: Planning Team Leader, Forest Plan Revision, 1839 South Newcomb Street, Porterville, CA 93257
- E-mail: r5planrevision@fs.fed.us

Local Clovis public meetings:

- June 16th: Public Meeting-Introducing the Documents, Clovis, CA, 6p-8p;
- August 4th: Public Meeting-Dialog and receiving written comments, Clovis, CA, 6p-8p
- June 28th: Public Webinar, on-line registration, 12-1:30p

Before the final revised forest plans are approved, there will be a **60-day objection filing period** for individuals or entities **to file objections** (36 CFR Part 219, Subpart B). Objections **will only be accepted from those who have previously submitted substantive formal comments specific** to the plan revisions during public comment opportunities; and Forest's will issue separate records of decisions and final revised forest plans.

Passing of the last non-politically appointed Chief of the Forest Service – Jack Ward Thomas

Jack Ward Thomas, the last Chief of the Forest Service not chosen as a political appointee, was Chief from 1993 to 1996. Thomas was a research wildlife biologist, an agency scientist, and used science as a leader; was known for being optimistic and straightforward. Thomas is remembered as a dedicated scientist for, through his work, science was elevated and took its rightful place, providing solutions to conservation challenges.

As Chief, Thomas faced many challenges, e.g. heavy conflict between the timber industry and environmental communities, particularly in the Pacific Northwest, and a controversial presidential forest plan for the spotted owl regions of the Pacific Northwest and northern California. Yet through it all, he managed to develop a pioneering ecosystem management approach (*precursor to current collaboratives*) on national forests and grasslands.

He received multiple awards including National Wildlife Federation, Conservation Achievement Award for Science; The Aldo Leopold Medal, The Wildlife Society, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and served as president of The Wildlife Society from 1976 to 1977. [He was an inspiration across the agency; the best Chief I worked for in my 41 years with the FS. tlt]