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May 7, 2013

U.S. Forest Service
ATTN: LMP Amendment
10845 Rancho Bernardo Road, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92127

Dear Supervisor Hernandez:

The following are the comments of the Santa Lucia Chapter of the Sierra Club on the Draft SEIS for the Southern California National Forests Land Management Plan Amendment. The Santa Lucia Chapter represents 2,000 members of the Sierra Club and includes the portion of Los Padres National Forest located in San Luis Obispo County.

On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, we are dismayed to see that the Forest Service has adopted a de facto no-new-wilderness policy in not zoning any new areas of LPNF as "Recommended Wilderness." We strongly urge you to designate new wilderness areas in the Los Padres National Forest.

In listing the reasons for doing so, we cannot improve on those provided on your agency's website:

- * Today, America's cities depend on water that flows from wilderness and we breathe air that is cleansed by vegetation growing there.
- * Wilderness protects natural processes, like fire, needed to sustain wildlife habitat and ensure rich biodiversity.
- * More than 12 million people visit wilderness each year to hike, hunt, fish, ride horses, raft, ski, and take pictures.
- * Wilderness areas help sustain local and regional economies and support many high quality jobs.
- * Wilderness is part of America's heritage and passed on as a legacy to our children by many who will never visit wilderness, yet value the existence of its natural and undeveloped character

- - www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/cda/wilderness.shtml

Wilderness designation is the best way to preserve the best unprotected wild places that remain in the Los Padres National Forest. We urge you to recommend new wilderness designation areas in the Los Padres to provide permanent protected lands for future generations to enjoy.

Please conserve our natural heritage.

Thank you,

Greg McMillan, Chair
Santa Lucia Chapter