



File Code: 7310

Date: March 27, 2008

Dear Interested Parties:

The Santa Clara/ Mojave Rivers Ranger District (SCMRRD) of the Angeles National Forest is conducting an environmental analysis under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate a construction project in Acton, California. We are soliciting public input of the issues to be addressed in the environmental analysis. The Forest is planning to construct a new District Office and Fire Station, for the SCMRRD, on a recently acquired 5½ acre property at 33708 Crown Valley Road, in Acton, CA 93519. Once the construction is completed, the District Office temporarily located at 28245 Avenue Crocker, Suite 220, Valencia, CA 91355 will move to its new location in Acton.

### **Background Information:**

In 1997, the Angeles National Forest restructured the district organizations on the forest, and reduced the number of administrative districts and their staff groups from five to three. The previous Saugus and Valyermo Ranger Districts were consolidated into the new SCMRRD. As a final step to completing the 1997 district re-organization process, a new District Office site was established in Acton to best serve the geographic layout of the newly consolidated ranger district. The new District Office property was selected following a Location Analysis and Preliminary Project Analysis (in accordance with Forest Service Handbook 7309.11,23.3) approved in September 2003. The property, at 33708 Crown Valley Road, Acton, CA 93519 was purchased in September 2006 under authority from Section 329 of the "Department of the Interior and related Agencies Appropriation Act, 2002," as amended by Section 325 of the 2003 Omnibus Appropriations bill. Meanwhile, the former District Office located at 30800 Bouquet Canyon Road, Saugus, California burned during the 2007 Buckweed Fire, and a temporary district office was set up at 28245 Avenue Crocker, Suite 220, Valencia, CA 91355.

One of the fire stations of the Angeles National Forest is located in Agua Dulce, California. According to a fire facilities analysis performed by forest staff, that station would provide first response services more expeditiously when relocated nearer to the Antelope Valley (14) Freeway, at 33708 Crown Valley Road, Acton, CA 93519.

### **Purpose and Need and Proposed Action:**

The purpose and need for the Action is to:

1. Construct a new District Office and appurtenant warehouse at the new location at 33708 Crown Valley Road, Acton, CA 93519, which is a more central location for the SCMRRD.
2. Construct a new fire station at the new location at 33708 Crown Valley Road, Acton, CA 93519, which will provide better first responder service than its current location in Agua Dulce.

The proposed action will consist of constructing the following at 33708 Crown Valley Road, Acton, CA 93519: a 6,500± square foot district office building, a 4,000± square foot warehouse building, an 800± square foot shop building, a 4,000± square foot fire engine garage and office building, and related driveways, parking, fencing, walkways, and landscaping.



The buildings and site will comply with the Forest Service architectural guidelines, will meet “Silver” LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) requirements as set by the U.S. Green Building Council, and will incorporate elements of the local community design standards. Construction is expected to start in summer 2009, with a completion date in 2010.

### **Possible Alternatives**

The Forest Service has identified preliminary action alternatives (besides the proposed action) for consideration in the environmental analysis. These are:

- The No-Action Alternative, under which the District Office will indefinitely remain at its temporary address at 28245 Avenue Crocker, Suite 220, Valencia, CA 91355, and the Fire Station would remain in Agua Dulce.
- The District Office would be reconstructed on its previously burned site at 30800 Bouquet Canyon Road, Saugus, California, and the Fire Station would remain in Agua Dulce.
- The District Office would be constructed as in the proposed action, but the Fire Station would remain in Agua Dulce.

Additional alternatives will be developed, as needed, during the environmental analysis. The final alternatives analyzed in detail will depend on the issues raised during public scoping and further investigation of the feasibility of alternatives.

### **Additional Information:**

A Biological Assessment and Evaluation (BA/BE) will be completed on the proposed project. Any recommended mitigations from the BA/BE will be implemented. An Archeological study will be conducted for the project area and any protection measures will be implemented.

The Responsible Official for the preparation of the environmental assessment is John Capell, District Ranger, SCMRD, 28245 Avenue Crocker, Suite 220, Valencia, CA 91355. Comments should be submitted in writing and will be accepted until May 1, 2008. Issues and concerns should be addressed to: George Farra, Assistant Forest Engineer, Angeles National Forest, 701 N. Santa Anita Avenue, Arcadia, CA 91006. Comments may also be submitted electronically to [gfarra@fs.fed.us](mailto:gfarra@fs.fed.us). All comments received become a part of the project record and are available for public review. Upon completion of the environmental analysis, an opportunity to comment will be provided to those who have previously expressed an interest in these types of projects and those who respond to the scoping letter. If you have any questions regarding this proposal, please contact George Farra at (626)574-5301.

Sincerely,

/s/ John F. Capell □

JOHN F. CAPELL

District Ranger