

# **DECISION MEMO**

## **USDA Forest Service**

### **KCAL Facility Improvement**

#### **Los Angeles River Ranger District Angeles National Forest Los Angeles County, California**

### **PROPOSED ACTION**

KCAL proposes to improve its facility at Mt. Wilson to comply with the February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 deadline to convert all television transmission to digital. KCAL is requesting authorization to improve the transmission facilities located at 1 Mt. Wilson Road, Building #9, Mt. Wilson, California, 91023 in accordance with a directive from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regarding Digital Television (DTV) transmission.

The scope of work is comprised of improvements to the facility electrical systems, HVAC, emergency power systems, site access gate and television transmission systems. The majority of the improvements are internal to the building structures. There will not be any addition of square footage to existing structures, modifying the television tower or changing the size of the fenced area where the buildings are located. The proposed improvements will be in accordance with the "Mt. Wilson Communications Site Management Plan." Licensed, bonded and insured professional tradesman will perform all site work.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Federal Communications Commission is requiring that all television transmission must be converted over to digital by February 17, 2009.

### **DECISION**

It is my decision to the facility improvements so KCAL to complete the projects outlined in their proposal of July 24, 2008.

### ***Mitigation and Minimization Measures***

The avoidance and minimization measures included in Appendix A are incorporated into my decision, and are mandatory conditions of the authorization for this project.

## REASONS FOR CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

This decision is categorically excluded from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement (E.I.S.) or an Environmental Assessment (EA) as identified in the Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook, FSH 1909.15, section 31.2, item 3(f).

*“Approving an additional telecommunication use at a site already used for such purposes.”*

Environmental analysis determined there were no extraordinary circumstances that might cause the action to have significant environmental effects; therefore, the proposed action is excluded from documentation in an Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment.

Extraordinary circumstances would include but are not limited to negative impacts on the following:

### **1. Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest sensitive species.**

The District Biologist has determined that the project site does not provide any suitable habitat for any threatened, endangered, or Forest sensitive species. Based on this, a Biological Evaluation/Biological Assessment (BE/BA) was not prepared. The project area does not provide suitable habitat for any Management Indicator Species (MIS). Based on this, no MIS analysis and report was completed (Angeles National Forest 2008a).

### **2. Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds.**

This action will have minimal impacts on flood plains, wetlands, and municipal watersheds.

### **3. Congressionally designated areas, such as Wilderness, Wilderness Study areas, or National Recreation Areas.**

The project does not involve any Congressionally designated areas (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2005).

### **4. Inventoried roadless areas.**

There are no inventoried roadless areas affected by this action (Angeles National Forest, 2000).

### **5. Research Natural Areas.**

There are no Research Natural Areas within the project area (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2005).

## **6. American Indian and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites**

General meetings with the local Native American community have not identified any American Indian or Alaska Native religious or cultural sites within the area.

## **7. Archaeological sites or historic properties or areas.**

The Forest Heritage Resource Program Manager has determined that the proposed action will not affect any historic properties and qualifies under Stipulation III(E)(1) of the Region 5 Section 106 Programmatic Agreement. Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, has been completed for this project.

## **SCOPING**

Scoping was conducted at the District and Forest levels. The proposed project with attached maps and plans were provided to the forest specialists. Specialist memos were prepared and are on file at the Los Angeles River Ranger District Office.

Internal scoping including the following Forest Service staff and resource specialists:

Leslie Welch – District Biologist  
Darrell Vance – Forest Heritage Resource Program Manager  
Mike McIntyre – LARRD District Ranger  
Sonja Bergdahl – Forest Engineer  
Ricardo Lopez – Civil Engineer

No public input was requested because this project is considered facility maintenance within the terms of an existing permit.

## **FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS**

This proposed action is consistent with management direction (Angeles National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan), as required by the National Forest Management Act (FSM 1926.41 and FSH 1909.12); National Environmental Policy Act; Endangered Species Act; National Historic Preservation Act; Clear Water Act; Clean Air Act; and, all other applicable Acts.

This action will not require a Civil Rights Impact Statement because it will not have a significant impact on the social environment.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**


The date of authorization for the project will be September 3, 2008 and is anticipated to be completed in approximately two months pending weather.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Pursuant to 36 CFR 215.12(f), this decision is not subject to review or appeal.

### **CONTACT PERSON**

For further information regarding this event, contact Michael McIntyre, District Ranger, Los Angeles River Ranger District, 12371 North Little Tujunga Road, San Fernando, CA 91342: phone number (818) 899-1900 extension 223.

APPROVED:   
MICHAEL J. MCINTYRE  
LARRD District Ranger

DATE: 9/4/08

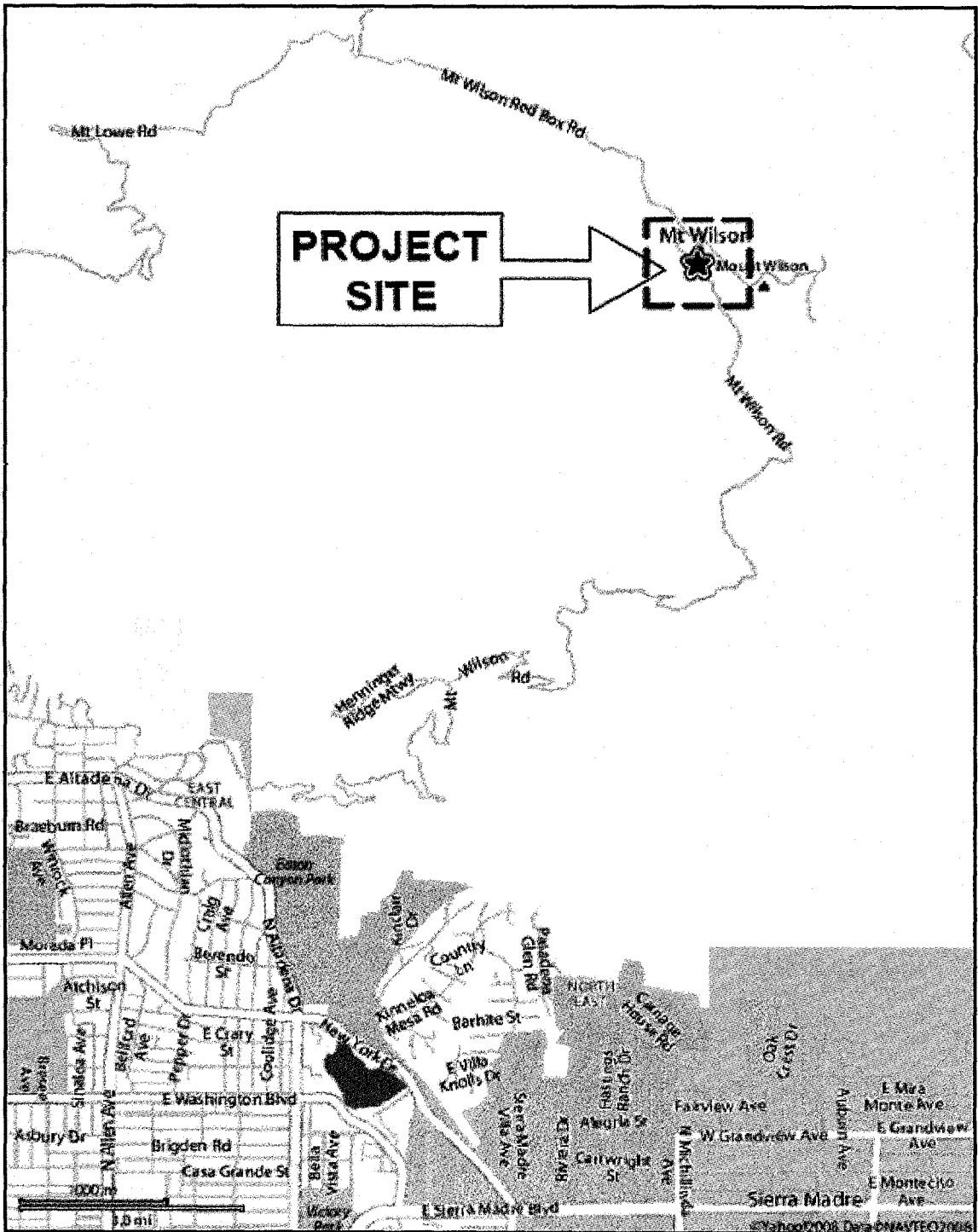
## REFERENCES

- Angeles National Forest. 2000. Inventoried Roadless Areas Map. Roadless Area Conservation. September 15, 2000. Available: <http://www.roadless.fs.fed.us/states/ca/ange.pdf>.
- Angeles National Forest. 2008a. Botany and Wildlife Report for Proposed Activities at the KCBS/KCAL Facility at the Mt. Wilson Communication Site. August 1, 2008.
- Angeles National Forest. 2008b. Section 106 PA Status for KCBS/KCAL Television Mt. Wilson Building #9 Transmission Facilities Improvement. August 27, 2008.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture 2005. Land Management Plan – Part 2 Angeles National Forest Strategy. Pacific Southwest Region R5-MB-076. September 2005.

# APPENDIX A

## Avoidance and Minimization Measures

- Prior to being brought on the Forest, any tools or equipment used for project implementation must be cleaned to ensure that they are free of any plant parts that could introduce invasive plant species to the project area.
- Excavation must be implemented in a manner that reduces the potential for entrapment of small mammals or reptiles. This can be accomplished by placement of a ramp that reasonably allows trapped individuals to crawl or walk out of the excavation. Depending on the size of the excavation and the amount of time the pit will be left open, it may be appropriate to place multiple ramps that will facilitate the movement of wildlife out of the pit. Generally, escape features are appropriate in situations where pits will remain open for 12 hours or more.
- Before an excavation is backfilled or covered, it must be checked to ensure that there are no live individuals inside. Backfilling or placement of a cover cannot occur until the excavation is clear of all live individuals.
- Project generated garbage must be properly stored/disposed for the duration of the project. When operations are complete, any excess materials or debris shall be removed from the work area.
- Wildlife encountered during the course of project implementation should be given the opportunity to evacuate the site. Personnel will be reminded that harassment, handling or removal of wildlife from the site is not permitted.



KCAL FACILITY – MT. WILSON