

# DECISION MEMO

## USDA Forest Service

### Shortcut Saddle SST Installation

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

#### PROPOSED ACTION

The Los Angeles River Ranger District, in partnership with the California Trail Users Coalition (CTUC), proposes to install a Sweet Smelling Toilet (SST) transmission.

The scope of work consists of the installation of a SST within the already developed area for the Shortcut Saddle Trailhead. Construction of the new SST will include the excavation of an area approximately 10 feet x 20 feet with the pit approximately 8 feet deep. All excavated material will be either used on site or placed in an approved disposal area. Exterior work will involve hardened surfaces that will make the SST ADA-compliant. The activities proposed for the SST construction will be confined to existing parking lot and disturbed areas.

#### BACKGROUND

The Rincon-Shortcut Off Highway Vehicle route, Silver Moccasin National Recreation Trail and Angeles Crest Scenic Highway converge at Shortcut Trailhead and placement of an SST at this site would benefit this diverse user group and provide an opportunity to showcase California Trail Users Coalition - Angeles National Forest partnership. This trailhead is utilized as a checkpoint for Mt Disappointment 50K-50Mile Endurance Run, Angeles Crest 100 Mile Endurance Run and a gathering area for OHV, thru hikers and Mountain Bike Users. With establishment of an SST, this site would be further utilized by Bicyclists (road bicycle) and motorists (i.e., motorcyclists) traveling along the Angeles Crest Scenic Highway as a rest stop, scenic vista point (Vetter Mountain Lookout or West Fork drainage) or information site (Shortcut Rincon OHV Trailhead Entrance Kiosk).

#### DECISION

It is my decision to approve the installation of a SST at the Shortcut Trailhead.

#### *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 1.

*“Construction and reconstruction of trails.”*

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. There will be no removal or modification of suitable habitat. No direct or indirect impacts to threatened, endangered, or Forest Service sensitive species are anticipated. Based on this, a Biological Evaluation/Biological Assessment (BE/BA) was not prepared. The project area does not provide suitable habitat for any of the 12 Management Indicator Species (MIS) for the Angeles National Forest. The proposal will not result in the removal or modification of habitat for 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 project 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 (Angeles National Forest 2008b).

## **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

Howard Okamoto – District Recreation Officer

Martin Dumpis – Deputy Forest Supervisor/Recreation and Lands Staff Officer

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

## **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 Howard Okamoto, District Recreation Officer, Los Angeles River Ranger District, 12371 North Little Tujunga Road, San Fernando, CA 91342: phone number (818) 899-1900 extension 229.

APPROVED:   
MICHAEL J. MCINTYRE  
LARRD District Ranger

DATE: 9/3/08

## 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. Proposed SST Installation at Shortcut Saddle. August 27, 2008.

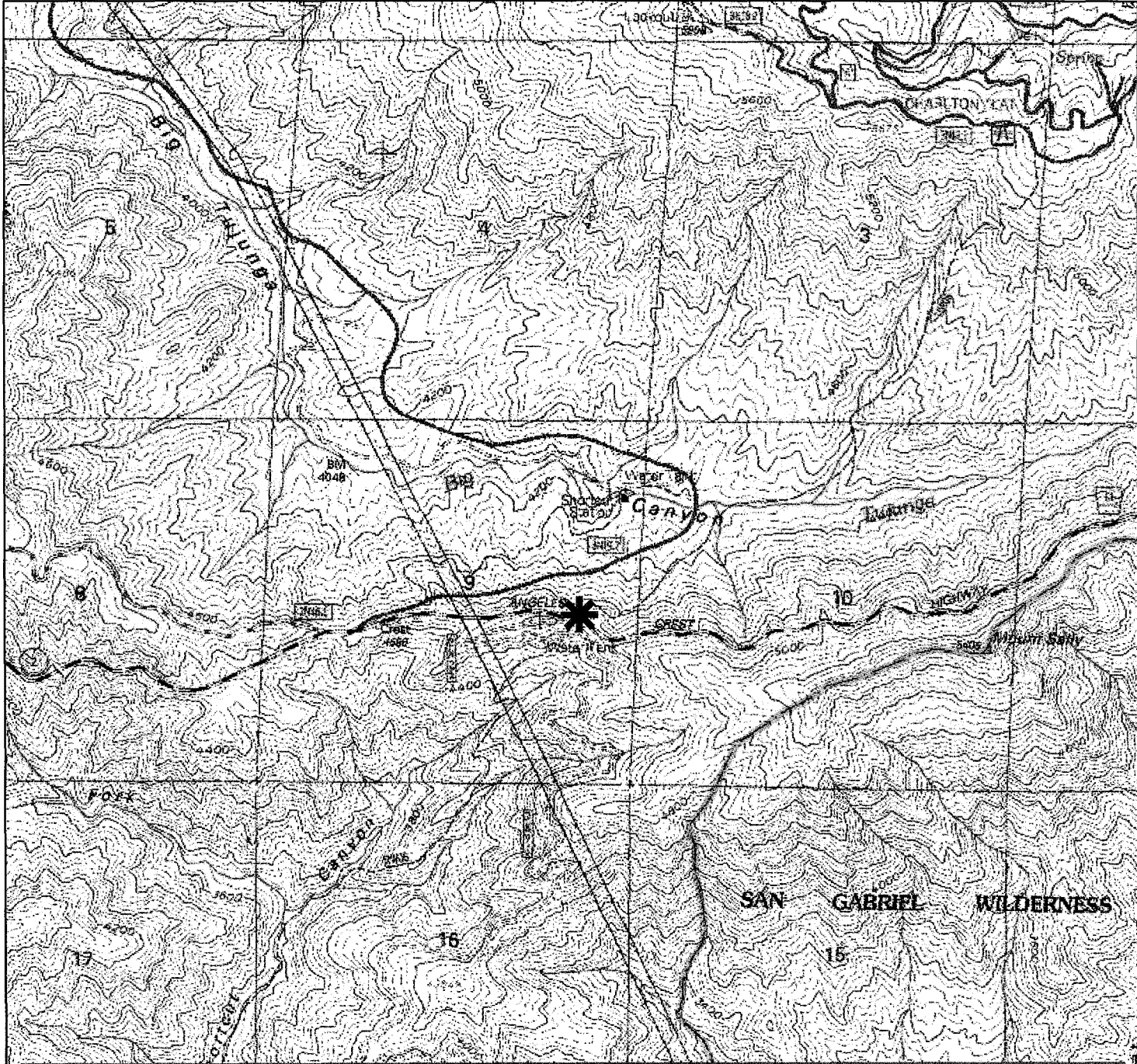
Angeles National Forest. 2008b. Section 106 PA Status for Shortcut Saddle Trailhead SST. March 31, 2008.

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

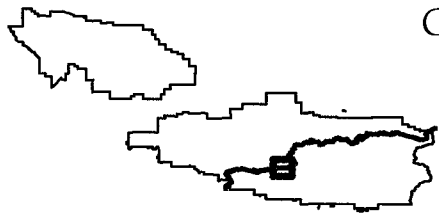
## Avoidance and Minimization Measures


- 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.
- All equipment except machinery except, trucks, vans, pickups, and cars used for daily transport of personnel, will be cleaned prior to entering Forest Service land. This includes wheels, undercarriages and bumpers. Cleaning can utilize water or air. An example of how to document the cleaning will be provided to the contractor.
- Holder shall notify Forest Service at least 2 working days prior to moving each piece of equipment on to National Forest Land, unless otherwise agreed. Notification will include cleaning information. Upon request of Forest Service, arrangements will be made for Forest Service to inspect each piece of equipment prior to it being placed in service.
- If equipment has operated in areas that the Forest Service has identified as containing invasive plant species, all equipment, and tools used at that site must also be washed AFTER work has been completed.
- Holder shall certify in writing compliance with the terms of this provision prior to each start-up of operations.
- If any new infestations of invasive species, identified by either Permit Holder or Forest Service Staff, on National Forest land in the work area or on the access route shall be promptly reported to the other party. A current list of invasive species of concern will be provided.

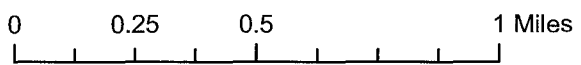


# Shortcut Saddle Trailhead SST Location Map

Angeles National Forest  
 Los Angeles River Ranger District  
 Chilao Flat Quadrangle



 Shortcut Saddle SST



 Highway 2

1:24,000