United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

Pacific Southwest Region

R5-MB-078

September 2005

Land Management Plan

Part 2 Los Padres National Forest Strategy

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Tables

Note: Tables were managed in a database environment, and were assigned unique numbers as their need was identified. During the lifetime of the analysis, over 500 tables were created for potential use. Some tables were later determined to be redundant or unnecessary. The planning team decided not to renumber the tables for publication due to the amount of work required to locate and update every reference to every table. Thus, the table numbers are not consecutive, and all table numbers were not used in the final documents.

The following format protocols (font type, size, and strength, as well as indentation) are used throughout the Land Management Plan.

All headings are Arial bold, in varying font sizes and indentation.

Text is generally Times New Roman, 12 point regular.

Table Titles are Arial, bold, 11 point.

Table column headings are in Arial Narrow, 10 pt, with a shaded background.
Table cell contents are Times New Roman, 12 point.

Photograph captions have a top and bottom border to separate them from regular text, and are 12 point Arial font. For example, this is a clip-art butterfly.

References to websites (URLs) are in OCR B MT, 10 point in the printed version. In the electronic version, these are live links. The electronic version is posted at:

`http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/lospadres/projects/lmp`

Land Management Plan Strategy

This document is Part 2 of the three-part (vision, strategy and design criteria) land and resource management plan (forest plan) for the Los Padres National Forest. The strategic direction and program emphasis objectives that are expected to result in the sustainability (social, economic and ecological) of the national forest and, over the long-term, the maintenance of a healthy forest are described in this document. The legislative mandate for the management of national forests requires that public lands be conservatively used and managed in order to ensure their sustainability and to guarantee that future generations will continue to benefit from their many values.[1] Forest plans are founded on the concept of sustainable use of the national forests. In its simplest terms, sustainability means to maintain or prolong. In order to foster the concept of sustainability, this section describes the program emphasis and strategies that may be employed to enable multiple uses to occur in ways that promote long-term sustainability. The program emphasis and management strategies are continuously projected over a three to five year period (over the life of the plan) in order to describe the projects or activities that may be employed as we move along the pathways toward the realization of the desired conditions described in Part 1 of the revised forest plan.

California Condor

Part 1 describes the national forest in the future, the niche it occupies in the community framework, the desired conditions the Forest Service is striving to realize, as well as the challenges the national forest will resolve in getting there. Part 2 supplements Part 1 of the forest plan. Part 2 also constitutes the 'tools' resource staff will use to accomplish the objectives that contribute to the realization of the desired conditions. Part 2 defines and describes each of the land use zones. The land use zones are an on-the-ground manifestation of the desired conditions and are the primary tools used to describe the strategic direction, including the management intent and suitable uses for areas of the national forest where the zone is used. Part 2 also includes a prospectus describing the past performance history of the national forest and the anticipated performance in three to five year increments over the life of the forest plan. Place-Based Program Emphasis is also described so that people will have a better understanding of what types of management is expected in specific areas of the national forest. Finally, Part 2 addresses the monitoring to be done to assess the effective implementation of the strategies used.

Part 3 of the forest plan is the design criteria and constitutes the 'rules' that the Forest Service will follow as the national forest implements projects and activities over time. The rules include the laws, agency policy, standards, and the associated guidance that is referenced for use at the project level.

[1] Committee of Scientists issued a final report on March 15, 1999, entitled *Sustaining the People's Lands*

Suitable Land Uses

Land Use Zones

Land use zones (CFR 219.11(c)) were used to map the Los Padres National Forest (LPNF) for the purpose of identifying appropriate management types of 'uses' that are consistent with the achievement of the desired conditions described in Part 1 of the revised forest plan (see Land Use Zone Maps in Appendix C). These land use zones are used to help demonstrate clearly management's intent and to indicate the anticipated level of public land use in any area (Place) of the national forest. The activities that are allowed in each zone are expected to result in progress along the pathway toward the realization of the desired conditions. National Forest land use zoning is similar in concept to the zoning models that are being used by counties or municipalities throughout southern California. Tables 2.3.1 through 2.3.4 display the suitability of specific uses by land use zone (note: recommended wilderness and existing wilderness zones are combined into the wilderness zone column on the tables).

Table 2.3.1. Suitable Uses Resource Management, LPNF

Land Use Zone:	DAI	BC	BCMUR	BCNM	CB	W
Activity or Use	Developed Areas Interface	Back Country	Back Country Motorized Use Restricted	Back Country Non-Motorized	Critical Biological	Wilderness
Rangeland Type Conversion for Forage production	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Restoration of Vegetation Condition	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	Suitable
Disposal of National Forest System lands	*By Exception	*By Exception	*By Exception	*By Exception	*By Exception	Not Suitable

** By Exception = Conditions which are not generally compatible with the land use zone but may be appropriate under certain circumstances .*

Table 2.3.2. Suitable Uses Public Use and Enjoyment, LPNF

Land Use Zone:	DAI	BC	BCMUR	BCNM	CB	W
Activity or Use	Developed Areas Interface	Back Country	Back Country Motorized Use Restricted	Back Country Non-Motorized	Critical Biological	Wilderness
Recreation Residence Tracts	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Organization Camps	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Lodges, Resorts and Clubs	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Hunting and Fishing	Regulated by the State (CDF&G)	Regulated by the State (CDF&G)	Regulated by the State (CDF&G)	Regulated by the State (CDF&G)	Regulated by the State (CDF&G)	Regulated by the State (CDF&G)
Target Shooting Areas	*By Exception	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Public Motorized Use on Forest System Roads	Suitable	Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Authorized Motorized Use	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	*By Exception	*By Exception
Off-Highway Vehicle Use on Forest System Roads and Trails	Designated Roads and Trails	Designated Roads and Trails	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Public Motorized Use off Forest System Roads and Trails	Suitable in Designated Open Areas	Suitable in Designated Open Areas	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Mountain Bikes Forest System Roads and Trails	Unless Otherwise Restricted	Unless Otherwise Restricted	Unless Otherwise Restricted	Unless Otherwise Restricted	Unless Otherwise Restricted	Not Suitable
Dispersed Area Camping	Suitable Unless Otherwise Restricted	Suitable Unless Otherwise Restricted	Suitable Unless Otherwise Restricted	Suitable Unless Otherwise Restricted	Not Suitable	Suitable Unless Otherwise Restricted

** By Exception = Conditions which are not generally compatible with the land use zone but may be appropriate under certain circumstances .*

Table 2.3.3. Suitable Uses Commodity and Commercial Uses, LPNF

Land Use Zone:	DAI	BC	BCMUR	BCNM	CB	W
Activity or Use	Developed Areas Interface	Back Country	Back Country Motorized Use Restricted	Back Country Non-Motorized	Critical Biological	Wilderness
(Non-Rec) Special Uses: Low Intensity Land Use	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	*By Exception	*By Exception
Communication Sites	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	*By Exception	*By Exception	Not Suitable
Livestock Grazing	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Not Suitable	Designated Areas
Major Transportation Corridors	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Major Utility Corridors	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Designated Areas	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Road construction or re-construction	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable for authorized use	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Developed Facilities	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Oil and Gas Exploration and Development Areas	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	*By Exception	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Minerals Resources Exploration and Development	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	*By Exception	*By Exception	Not Suitable
Renewable Energy Resources	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	*By Exception	Not Suitable	Not Suitable
Wood Products, including fuelwood harvesting	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	Not Suitable
Special Forest Products	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	*By Exception

** By Exception = Conditions which are not generally compatible with the land use zone but may be appropriate under certain circumstances.*

Table 2.3.4. Suitable Uses Fire and Fuels Management, LPNF

Land Use Zone:	DAI	BC	BCMUR	BCNM	CB	W
Activity or Use	Developed Areas Interface	Back Country	Back Country Motorized Use Restricted	Back Country Non-Motorized	Critical Biological	Wilderness
Community Protection Areas	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	*By Exception
Fuelbreak Construction including type conversion	Suitable	Suitable	Suitable	*By Exception	*By Exception	*By Exception
Wildland Fire Use Strategy	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable	Not Suitable

** By Exception = Conditions which are not generally compatible with the land use zone but may be appropriate under certain circumstances.*

Specific uses are allowed on national forests except when identified as not suitable, because of law, national or regional policy, or the revised forest plan. What this means is that the forest plans are permissive. That is, activities may occur unless the forest plan says that they cannot. However, activities are not authorized based solely on the land use zoning for this forest plan. The suitable uses identified in tables 2.3.1 through 2.3.4 are intended as guidance for consideration of future activities and do not affect existing authorized occupancy and uses or the administrative procedures used to manage them. Most ground disturbing activities require further project or site-specific analysis before a decision is made. The uses that are identified as suitable in each of the land use zones are subject to the design criteria, as well as other guidance described in Part 3 (Appendix A) of this forest plan. The standards, along with applicable guidance are typically used during project or site-specific planning. Applicable guidance includes the body of information encompassed by the Forest Service Manual and Handbooks, Species Accounts, Best Management Practices, Soil and Water Conservation Handbooks, the Built Environment Image Guide, or other documents with guidance that is identified for use based on site-specific project analysis.

Several activities are described in the suitable use tables as being permitted in designated areas only. For example, what this means is that motorized uses are restricted to designated roads and trails and may be restricted or expanded further in order to achieve the desired condition for the land use zones. Vehicular traffic traveling cross-country or on non-designated routes is not allowed in any zone.

Seven land use zones have been identified for the Los Padres National Forest (see Land Use Zone maps in Appendix C). These zones, including overlays described in the following section are applicable to only the National Forest System lands and in no way modify zoning applied to other ownerships by local government agencies. When other lands are acquired and become National Forest System lands, then the adjacent land use zones are applied unless changed through a Forest Plan Amendment. The land use zones descriptions in this section help to paint a picture of the anticipated level or intensity of public use or administrative activities. The existing character of each zone is included, along with the characteristic Recreation Opportunity

Spectrum (ROS) objective (see Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Maps in Appendix C). The zones, in order of decreasing land use intensity are:

- Developed Area Interface (DAI)
- Back Country (BC)
- Back Country Motorized Use Restricted (BCMUR)
- Back Country Non-Motorized (BCNM)
- Critical Biological (CB)
- Recommended Wilderness (RW)
- Existing Wilderness (EW)

Developed Area Interface (60,150 acres or 3.4 percent of the national forest): This zone includes areas adjacent to communities or concentrated developed areas with more scattered or isolated community infrastructure. The level of human use and infrastructure is typically higher than in other zones.

The characteristic ROS objectives are Rural and Roaded Natural. A number of highly popular developed recreation facilities, recreation and non-recreation special-uses facilities and national forest administrative facilities may be included in this zone. The level of development within this zone varies between areas that are highly developed to areas where no development has occurred.

The DAI zone is managed for motorized public access. Approximately 11.8 percent of the National Forest System and non-system user created routes are found in this zone including 33 miles of unclassified road. The National Forest System roads are generally managed and maintained to a higher standard, facilitating public access to developed recreation opportunities and authorized infrastructure. A designated off-highway vehicle (OHV) system may be included in some locations, often including trailheads or staging areas leading to Back Country areas.

Most direct community protection Wildland/Urban Interface Defense Zones (see Appendix K in Part 3 of the forest plan) and some Threat Zones are anticipated to be located within the DAI zone.

Although this zone may have a broad range of higher intensity uses, the management intent is to limit development to a slow increase of carefully designed facilities to help direct use into the most suitable areas and concentrating on improving facilities before developing new ones. National Forest staff expect that there will be some road construction, but anticipate no more than a 5 percent net-increase in road mileage.

Back Country (332,172 acres or 18.6 percent of the national forest): This zone includes areas of the national forest that are generally undeveloped with few roads. The characteristic ROS objectives are Semi-Primitive Motorized with limited areas of Roaded Natural. Most of the national forest's remote recreation and administrative facilities are found in this zone. The level of human use and infrastructure is generally low to moderate.

The zone is managed for motorized public access on designated roads and trails. Approximately 57.8 percent of the National Forest System and non-system roads are found in this zone including 140 miles of unclassified road. Some roads within this zone may be closed to public access. The majority of National Forest System roads and other road systems that interconnect

areas of concentrated development are found in this zone. A network of low-standard remote roads provide access for a wide variety of dispersed recreation opportunities in remote areas such as camping and access to trailhead facilities for hiking or biking. Some new trails may be constructed to improve opportunities between trails on the existing system. The majority of the designated OHV system is found here.

Wildland/Urban Interface Threat Zones (see Appendix K in Part 3 of the forest plan) are characteristic in this zone. Managers anticipate locating community protection vegetation treatments that require permanent roaded access (such as fuelbreaks) within the Back Country zone.

Although this zone generally allows a broad range of uses, the management intent is to retain the natural character inherent in this zone and limit the level and type of development. National Forest staff expect to manage the zone for no increase or a very low level of increase in National Forest System roads. Managers expect to limit development to a slow increase of carefully designed facilities to help direct use into the most suitable areas and remove temporary facilities when they are no longer needed.

Back Country (Motorized Use Restricted) (319,884 acres or 18 percent of the national forest): This zone includes areas of the national forest that are generally undeveloped with few roads. Few facilities are found in this zone, but some may occur in remote locations. The characteristic ROS objectives are Semi-Primitive Motorized and Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized. The level of human use and infrastructure is low to moderate.

The zone will be managed for non-motorized (mechanized, equestrian, and pedestrian) public access. Motorized use is restricted to administrative purposes only that include Forest Service, other agency, or tribal government needs, as well as access needed to private land or authorized special-uses. Administrative access is intermittent and generally limited to existing roads or to temporary roads needed for resource management purposes. The intent is to use temporary roads or gated permanent roads while management is occurring and then gate the permanent roads or remove the temporary route when done.

Approximately 25.9 percent of the National Forest System and non-system roads are found in this zone including 114 miles of unclassified road. A limited number of National Forest System roads and other road systems that access administrative and authorized facilities and private land are found here. A network of low-standard remote roads provides access for a wide variety of non-motorized dispersed recreation opportunities including camping, hiking, biking, hunting and fishing. Designated OHV use is not suitable in this zone.

Wildland/Urban Interface Threat Zones (see Appendix K in Part 3 of the forest plan) are characteristic in this zone. Managers anticipate locating community protection vegetation treatments that require permanent roaded access (such as fuelbreaks) within the Back Country Motorized Use Restricted zone.

Although this zone allows a range of low intensity land uses, the management intent is to retain the natural character of the zone and limit the level and type of development. Some roads will be constructed and maintained, but the intent is to manage the zone for no increase or a very low level of increase in system development. Managers will consider expanding the ability of

existing facilities to meet demand before proposing new facilities and removing temporary facilities when they are no longer needed.

Back Country Non-Motorized (171,035 acres or 9.6 percent of the national forest): This zone generally includes areas of the national forest that are undeveloped with few, if any roads. The characteristic ROS objective is Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized. Developed facilities supporting dispersed recreation activities are minimal and generally limited to trails and signage. The level of human use and infrastructure is low.

The zone is managed for a range of non-motorized uses that include mechanized, equestrian and pedestrian public access. Administrative access (usually for community protection) is allowed by exception for emergency situations and for short duration management purposes (such as fuel treatment). The intent is to use temporary routes while management is occurring and then close or remove the route. Access to authorized facilities and to private land is not anticipated, but may occur by exception when there are existing rights to such access.

Approximately 1.8 percent of the National Forest System and non-system roads are found in this zone including 17 miles of unclassified road. A network of low-standard Back Country trails provide public access for a wide variety of non-motorized dispersed recreation opportunities including remote area camping, hiking, mountain biking, hunting and fishing. Designated OHV use is not suitable in this zone, and no designated OHV routes are located in this zone.

Wildland/Urban Interface Threat Zones (see Appendix K in Part 3 of the forest plan) may occur in this zone. Managers anticipate locating community protection vegetation treatments that require only temporary roaded access (such as mechanical thinning of trees or prescribed burning) within the Back Country Non-Motorized zone.

While a range of non-motorized public uses are generally allowed, the management intent is to typically retain the undeveloped character and natural appearance (fuelbreaks that contrast with the natural character may be present) of this zone and to limit the level of development to a low level of increase. Facility construction (except trails) is generally not allowed, but may occur in remote locations where roaded access is not needed for maintenance. Managers are expected to remove temporary facilities when they are no longer needed.

Critical Biological (1,641 acres or 0.1 percent of the national forest): This zone includes the most important areas on the national forest to manage for the protection of species-at-risk. Facilities are minimal to discourage human use. The level of human use and infrastructure is low to moderate.

Wildland/Urban Interface Threat Zones (see Appendix K in Part 3 of the forest plan) may occur in this zone. Community protection vegetation treatments within the critical biological land use zone may occur by exception. In these cases, managers will consider species and habitat needs.

The management intent is to retain the natural character and habitat characteristics in this zone and limit the level of human development to manage for protection of species-at-risk. Activities and modification to existing infrastructure are allowed if they are beneficial or neutral to the species for which the zone was primarily designated (see table 526: Los Padres NF Critical Biological Land Use Zones). Human uses are more restricted in this zone than in Back Country Non-Motorized in order to protect species needs, but are not excluded. Low impact uses, such as hiking, mountain biking and hunting are generally allowed. Motorized use of existing National Forest System roads may be regulated. Approximately .2 percent of the National Forest System

and non-system roads are found in this zone, including one mile of unclassified road. Road density will not be increased and may be decreased as a result of species protection requirements.

Table 526. Los Padres NF Critical Biological Land Use Zones

Primary Species Protected and Primary Uses			
CBLUZ	Primary Species Protected	Place(s)	Primary Uses This is a partial list of activities associated with these CBLUZ's. See Suitable Use Tables (Part 2) for full description of all suitable uses.
Upper Piru	Arroyo toad	Sespe, Hungry - Valley Mutau	Current uses of hiking, fishing, mountain biking on Hardluck Campground Road, and use of the USGS gauge are retained. However, during the breeding season for arroyo toad, camping at Hardluck Campground and use of Hardluck Campground Rd. by motor vehicles is not a suitable use.
Upper Sespe	Arroyo toad	Sespe	Hiking and fishing are retained. Unsuitable uses have already been removed through Lion Campground decommissioning.
Mono Creek	Arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, Least Bell's vireo	Figueroa - Santa Ynez	Current uses of camping, hiking, fishing, biking are retained
Indian Creek	Arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, Least Bell's vireo	Figueroa - Santa Ynez	Current uses of camping, hiking, fishing, biking are retained
Middle Santa Ynez	Arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, Least Bell's vireo	Figueroa - Santa Ynez	Current uses of hiking, fishing, biking are retained
Upper Santa Ynez	Arroyo toad, California red-legged frog	Figueroa - Santa Ynez	Hiking, fishing, and biking are retained

Existing Wilderness (860,678 acres or 48.3 percent of the national forest): This zone includes Congressionally designated wildernesses. Only uses consistent with all applicable wilderness legislation and with the primitive character are allowed in existing and recommended wildernesses. Road access is limited to uses identified in the specific legislation designating the wilderness (see wilderness in the forest-specific design criteria of Part 2 of the forest plan). Approximately 2.5 percent of the National Forest System and non-system roads are found in this zone including 19 miles of unclassified road. The characteristic Recreation Opportunity Spectrum objective is Primitive with limited areas of Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized.

Wildland/Urban Interface Threat Zones (see Appendix K in Part 3 of the forest plan) may occur in this zone. Community Protection vegetation treatments within the existing wilderness zone may occur by exception. In these cases, managers will consider wilderness needs.

The management intent is to administer this zone for the use and enjoyment of people while preserving its wilderness character and natural conditions. Non-conforming uses will be removed to preserve wilderness character. Designated wilderness includes:

- Chumash Wilderness
- Dick Smith Wilderness
- Garcia Wilderness
- Machesna Mountain Wilderness
- Matilija Wilderness
- San Rafael Wilderness
- Santa Lucia Wilderness
- Sespe Wilderness
- Silver Peak Wilderness
- Ventana Wilderness

Recommended Wilderness (35,821 acres or 2 percent of the national forest): This zone includes land that the Forest Service is recommending to Congress for wilderness designation and will be managed in the same manner as existing wilderness so that the wilderness attributes of the area are retained until Congress passes legislation, or the area is released from consideration. If Congress elects to not designate an area, the area would be zoned as Back Country Non-Motorized until modified by a subsequent plan amendment; there are no roads in this zone.

Wildland/Urban Interface Threat Zones (see Appendix K in Part 3 of the forest plan) may occur in this zone. Community protection vegetation treatments within the recommended wilderness land use zone may occur by exception. In these cases, managers will consider wilderness needs.

The management intent is to administer this zone for the use and enjoyment of people while preserving its wilderness character and natural conditions. Wilderness recommendations include:

- Chumash - Toad Springs (Chumash Wilderness)section20_20_10_20_10.htm
- Madulce-Buckhorn (Dick Smith Wilderness)
- Matilija (Matilija Wilderness)section20_20_10_20_70.htm
- Mono (Dick Smith Wilderness)

Special Designation Overlays

Land use designations overlay the land use zones. Suitable uses identified in the land use zone tables are generally suitable in these overlay classifications unless specifically excluded. When differences occur in suitable uses between the land use zone and special designation, the more restrictive set of allowable uses applies.

Wild and Scenic River

Wild and Scenic River *eligibility* (an inventory and evaluation of whether a river is free-flowing and possesses one or more outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) including scenery, recreation, geology, fish and wildlife, history, cultural (prehistoric), or similar values) was completed for the four southern California national forests. If found eligible, a river segment was then analyzed as to its current level of development (water resources projects, shoreline development, and accessibility) and a recommendation was made that it be placed into one of three classes—wild, scenic or recreational. The final procedural step (*suitability)* provides the basis for determining whether to recommend to Congress an eligible river as part of the National System.

The Los Padres National Forest completed the suitability studies for the seven rivers determined eligible, including evaluation for suitability under the alternatives developed for this plan revision.

Suitable uses are those compatible with protecting and enhancing the outstandingly remarkable values for which the river was designated or found eligible.

Designated Rivers include:

- Sespe Creek
- Big Sur River
- Sisquoc River

Rivers recommended for designation include all eligible segments of:

- Upper segment of Piru Creek
- Upper segment of Sespe Creek
- Arroyo Seco River

All existing facilities, management actions, and approved uses will be allowed to continue in eligible river corridors until a decision is made on inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic River System, provided these facilities, actions, and uses do not interfere with the protection and enhancement of the river's outstandingly remarkable values.

Proposed new facilities, management actions, or uses on national forest land are not allowed if they have the potential to affect the eligibility or potential classification of the river segment.

Uses comply with Forest Service Handbook 1909.12, chapter 8.2, which includes a description of developments and activities that are permitted, restricted or prohibited within the designated river corridor for each of the three classifications (wild, scenic and recreational).

Inventoried Roadless Areas

Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) were originally mapped as a result of the second Roadless Area Review (RARE II), which was documented in a final environmental impact statement dated January of 1979, and refined during development of the national forest land management plans. These maps were identified in a set of inventoried roadless area maps, contained in the Forest Service Roadless Area Conservation Rule, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Volume 2, dated November 2000. A final Roadless Area Conservation Rule was published in May of 2005, allowing optional State government involvement through a petition process. Alternatively the 1982 NFMA planning rule allows for the analysis and evaluation of roadless areas, including boundary adjustments, in the forest plan revision process. An updated inventory has been prepared to reflect changes in the roadless inventory due to analysis and evaluation made in this forest plan revision. Adjustments to the inventory include correction of mapping errors including boundary roads mistakenly included within an IRA, removal of those areas that Congress has designated as wilderness (21,123 acres on the Los Padres National Forest), addition of undeveloped areas that were not part of the original inventory but were recommended as wilderness in this forest plan, and implementation of the following classification to reflect the land use zoning decisions in the revised forest plan:

- 1a - IRAs allocated to a prescription that does not allow road construction and the forest plan recommends as wilderness.
- 1b - IRAs allocated to a prescription that does not allow road construction or reconstruction.
- 1c - IRAs allocated to a prescription that allows road construction or reconstruction.

(See the Inventoried Roadless Area Maps in Appendix C)

Research Natural Areas

Research Natural Areas are relatively undisturbed areas of the national forest that form a long-term network of ecological reserves designated for research, education, and the maintenance of biodiversity. This designation applies to both established and proposed research natural areas.

Research Natural Areas are designated to preserve a spectrum of relatively pristine areas that represent a wide range of natural variability within important natural ecosystems and environments, and areas that have unique characteristics of scientific importance. Research Natural Areas are also selected for one or more of the following reasons:

- To serve as reference areas for evaluating the range of natural variability and the impacts of management in similar environments.
- To protect and maintain representative or key elements of biological diversity at the genetic, species, population, community, or ecosystem levels.
- To serve as areas for the study of ecosystems and ecological processes including succession.
- To provide onsite and extension educational activities.
- To serve as baseline areas for measuring ecological change.

Uses that retain the research values for which the site is designated are appropriate.

Established Research Natural Areas include:

- American Canyon
- Black Butte
- San Emigdio Mesa
- Cone Peak Gradient

Recommended Research Natural Areas include:

- Big Pine Mountain
- Sawmill Mountain
- White Mountain
- Valley Oak
- Ventana Cones

Special Interest Areas

Special Interest Areas protect and, where appropriate, foster public use and enjoyment of areas that feature scenic, historical, geological, botanical, zoological, paleontological, or other special characteristics. Uses that are compatible with maintaining the target of the areas designation are appropriate.

Special Interest Areas include:

- Cuesta Ridge
- Dry Lakes Ridge
- Mt. Pinos Summit
- Quatal Canyon
- Sierra Madre
- Alder Creek
- Lion Den Spring
- Southern Redwood
- Foster Bear Ponds
- Camatta
- Mono Basin
- Milpitas

Other Designations:

Table 476. Designated Communication Sites, Los Padres National Forest

Communications Site Name	Existing Uses	Approximate Location	Restrictions
Anderson Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec. 21, T20S, R3E, MDM	
Vaqueros Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec. 3, T20S, R6E, MDM	
Black Mountain	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 15, T29S, R15E, MDM	
Branch Mountain	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 31, T31S, R18E, MDM	Government Only
Cuesta Peak	Broadcast/ High-power	Sec 35, T29S, R12E, MDM	
La Panza	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 15, T31S, R17E, MDM	
Mount Lowe	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 17, T30S, R13E, MDM	
Plowshare Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 4, T11S, R30E, SBM	
Tassajera Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 20, T29S, R12E, MDM	
Tepusquet Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power/(south) Broadcast/ High-power/(north)	Sec 30, T10S, R31W, SBM	
Broadcast Peak	Broadcast/ High-power	Sec 17, T5S, R29W, MDM	
Camino Cielo	Single User VORTAC/ Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 13, T5N, R28W, SBM	Government Only
La Cumbre Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 21, T5N, R27W, SBM	Restricted Use
West La Cumbre	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 20 & 21, T5N, R27W, SBM	Government Only
Rattlesnake Pass	Broadcast/ High-power	Sec 35, T5N, R27W, SBM	Restricted Use
West Santa Ynez Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 11, T5N, R30W, SBM	Government Only
Santa Ynez Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 12, T5N, R30W, SBM	
East Santa Ynez Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 12, T5N, R30W, SBM	Restricted Use
Sisar Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 24, T5N, R22W, SBM	Government Only

Communications Site Name	Existing Uses	Approximate Location	Restrictions
Frazier Mountain	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 14 & 23, T8N, R20W, SBM	
McPherson Peak	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 6, T9N, R27W, SBM	
Mount Abel	Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 26, T9N, R22W, SBM	Restricted Use
Mount Pinos	Single User/Non-Broadcast/ Low-power	Sec 6, T8N, R21W, SBM	Government Only
Olive Canyon	Non-Broadcast/Low-power	Sec 24, T9N, R26W, SBM	Restricted Use

Table 486. Designated Utility Corridors - Los Padres National Forest

Utility Corridor Name	Approximate Land Area		Existing Uses
	Acres	Miles	
Midway Vincent #1 & #2	195	4.3	500KV lines (2), Fiber Optic Line

Table 480. Recreation Residence Tracts, Los Padres National Forest

- Santa Lucia - Monterey RD
- Figueroa - Santa Lucia RD
- Oso - Santa Barbara RD
- Santa Ynez - Santa Barbara RD
- Chuchupate - Mt. Pinos RD

Table 490. Designated Shooting Areas - Los Padres National Forest

Component	Shooting Areas
Concession-Operated Sites	None
Permitted Gun Clubs: Limited or No Public Access	Winchester Gun Club Ojai Gun Club
Designated Shooting Sites by Forest Order (Other Shooting Restrictions May Apply)	3 sites along Camino Cielo
Remainder of Forest	The rest of the Forest is generally closed to recreational shooting although sites have been identified where future recreational shooting may be allowed under managed conditions per Standard S36.

Scenery Management System

The Scenery Management System (SMS) is a tool for integrating public benefits, values, desires, and preferences regarding aesthetics and scenery for all levels of land management planning. SMS includes specific scenic objectives that have been designated for all areas of the national forest. At the project level, all national forest activities are subject to review of the scenic integrity objectives (see Scenic Integrity Objective Maps in map appendix).

Public Uses Regulated by Other Agencies

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDF&G) manages California's fish and wildlife populations for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public.

Hunting is permitted throughout the national forests of southern California during hunting seasons designated by the CDF&G. Hunting is not permitted in those areas where the discharge of firearms is prohibited by county ordinance, California State law, or federal regulations. Hunters must follow all laws including no hunting within 150 yards of a residence, building, campsite, developed recreation site or occupied area for safety. Except as permitted by CDF&G, it is unlawful to use a dog to pursue/take animals or to train a dog for hunting. The CDF&G may issue dog training and organizational field trial permits authorizing releasing and taking domestically reared game birds, bobwhite quail, or coturnix quail. Such organized events require a special-use authorization from the appropriate national forest office.

Angling is encouraged in most areas of the national forests during fishing seasons designated by the CDF&G. Some locations have special regulations and a few are closed to fishing in order to protect the steelhead trout and other aquatic species that depend on high quality habitat.

Prospectus

The prospectus describes recent trends and expectations regarding the levels of experiences, goods and services, or other outcomes that are supplied by the national forest, as well as anticipated resource improvements planned over the next three to five years. Past performance can be a good indicator of what is expected in the near future. Performance expectations are projected into the future. Annual monitoring and evaluation of trends in performance indicators determine if there is a need to shift program emphasis to more effectively move toward the desired conditions (see Monitoring Trends and Performance Indicators). Strategic program emphasis is described through specific objectives that the national forest will emphasize under current budget expectations. Utilizing Place-specific desired conditions and management emphasis from Part 2, the Forest Supervisor will plan and implement projects that contribute to achieving program-level desired conditions described in Part 1, while meeting the standards described in Part 3. Information in this prospectus will be updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in management emphasis or budget fluctuations. Specific strategies and tactics that are linked to program objectives are found in Appendix B. These are referenced from each of the applicable program objectives discussed in this section. The final section describes examples of performance risks that could cause a need for change in management emphasis (see Performance Risks).

Program Emphasis and Objectives

A methodology common to the four southern California national forests was applied during the development of the Forest Business Plan (`http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/business-plans`), in order to describe the activities and programs for the Los Padres National Forest. Activities were organized into six functional areas, which include all areas of business for which the national forest is responsible. The functional areas collectively include 35 programs. National Forest management uses the results to clearly communicate program capability both internally and externally.

The six functional areas are:

- Management & Administration: National Forest leadership, management and administrative support activities, communications, external affairs, community outreach, planning, human resources, information technology, and financial management.
- Resource Management: Activities related to managing, preserving, and protecting the national forest's cultural and natural resources.
- Public Use & Enjoyment: Activities which provide visitors with safe, enjoyable and educational experiences while on the national forest and accommodate changing trends in visitor use and community participation and outreach.
- Facility Operations & Maintenance: Activities required to manage and operate the national forest's infrastructure (i.e., roads, facilities, trails, and structures).
- Commodity & Commercial Uses: Grazing management, forest special product development, and activities related to managing non-recreation special-uses such as national forest access, telecommunications sites, and utility corridors.

- Fire & Aviation Management: Wildland fire prevention through education, hazardous fuels reduction, and proactive preparation. This program also includes on-forest wildland fire suppression, and national or international wildland fire and emergency incident response.

Monitoring Trends and Performance Indicators

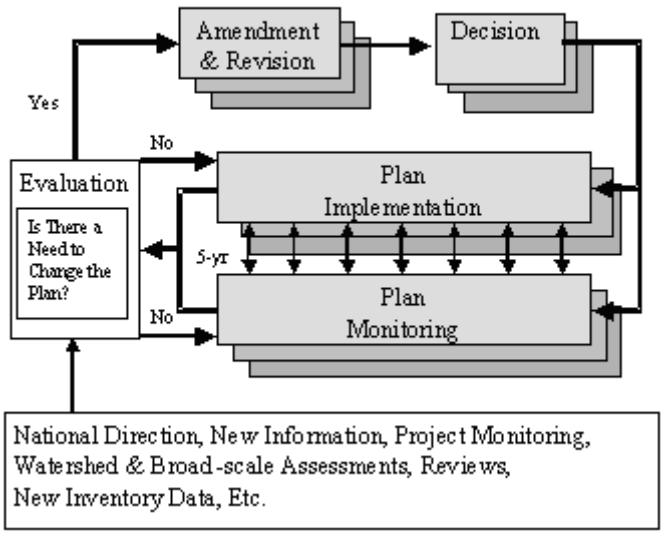
Monitoring in Part 2 of the forest plan is focused on annual program implementation including inventory. The national forest currently uses performance indicators for tracking program accomplishments. The current system is expected to be augmented by a performance accountability system integrating annual budgets with programs of work and linking these to tracking of Strategic Plan performance indicators.

Each of the key performance indicators is estimated for two budget levels in the performance history section; one based on the current budget trend and the other an estimate of the total capability and need for the program activity on the national forest assuming an unconstrained budget. Performance indicators are shown at the end of each management function section:

- Resource Management, Resource Management Performance Indicators, LPNF (table 2.3.5, page 24)
- Public Use and Enjoyment, Public Use and Enjoyment Performance Indicators, LPNF (table 2.3.6, page 28)
- Facilities Operation and Maintenance, Facilities Operations and Maintenance Performance Indicators, LPNF (table 2.3.7, page 30)
- Commodity and Commercial Uses, Commodities and Commercial Uses Performance Indicators, LPNF (table 2.3.8, page 32)
- Fire and Aviation Management, Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicators, LPNF (table 2.3.9, page 34)

Actual performance is tracked over time through annual documentation of accomplishment and these trends are evaluated periodically to determine if the national forest needs to shift program strategies (see The Three Parts of a Plan in the Adaptive Cycle). This data is reported in the annual monitoring and evaluation report as part of the national forest's implementation monitoring efforts.

The Three Parts of a Plan in the Adaptive Cycle

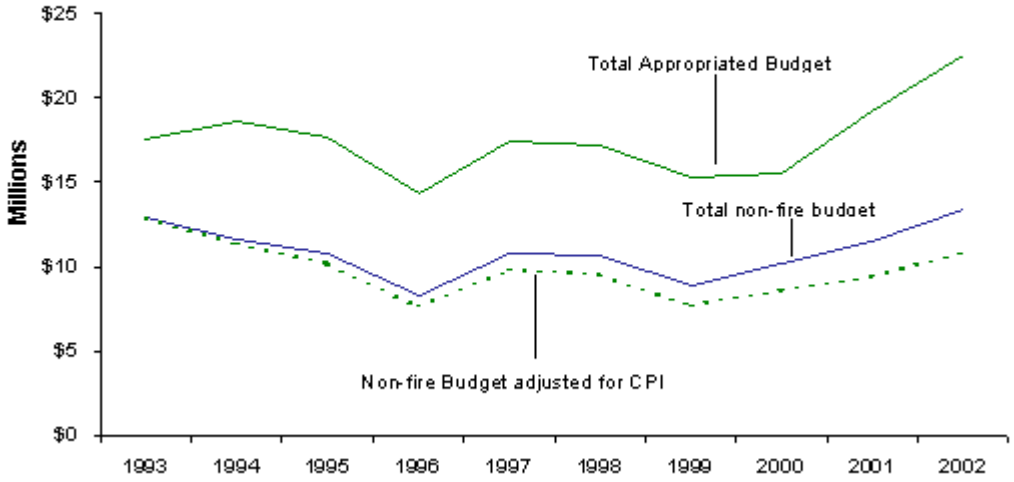


Inventory is a continuous effort (see AM 2 – Forest-wide Inventory Program Strategies and Tactics section). As funding is available, priority inventories are implemented and reported through various resource information systems including interagency systems. Periodic evaluation of inventory data is used to explore trends in resource conditions over time. Annual monitoring and

evaluation reports (AM 1 - Land Management Plan Monitoring and Evaluation) will document when there is a need to change the forest plan in response to declining trends in resource conditions.

General Budget History

The top line of the figure below shows the total annual appropriated budget as allocated to the Los Padres National Forest for the ten-year period 1993-2002. This total is in actual dollars for each year. With some shorter-term variations, it shows that the budget declined in actual dollars between 1993 and 2000. The budget rose sharply after 2000, but a large share of the national forest budget, accounting for the sharp increase, was limited by Congressional designation to fire suppression preparedness and hazardous fuels reduction. These funds are not available for general national forest management and public services outside of fire.



When the fire budget is subtracted from the total appropriated budget, the total non-fire budget (middle line) barely regains the 1993 funding level in 2002 in actual dollars. If the national forest makes an adjustment for inflation to see how the budget trend for non-fire funding looks in constant dollars (lower dotted line), the national forest sees that in 2002, the Los Padres National Forest operated its non-fire activities with only 84 percent of its 1993 budget. Furthermore, past budgets were barely adequate to maintain programs and facilities to standard. With the current budget, the Los Padres National Forest is unable to meet standards, particularly for facilities, roads, and trails, or to make needed improvements.

Management and Administration

The current complex web of federal, state, county, local, partnership, non-profit, and private relationships requires broad and deep skills and experiences in order to effectively manage the national forest. Management & Administration is divided into General Management, Financial Management, General Administration, District Management, Planning, Public Affairs, and Information Technology programs. The forest plan provides guidance for two of these programs: general and district management.

One of a number of public open houses hosted by the Los Padres NF for the forest plan revision.

General Management: Vision, leadership, performance reporting, legislative contacts and priority setting are the tasks of the Forest Supervisor, Deputy Forest Supervisor, and their immediate support staff. From the Los Padres National Forest Supervisor's Office, human resources, engineering, recreation, fire and aviation management, resources, public affairs, information technology and other staff functions provide technical and administrative support to the Ranger Districts.

District Management: The national forest is divided into five Ranger Districts: Monterey, Santa Lucia, Santa Barbara, Ojai and Mount Pinos. Each District Ranger and staff is directly responsible for the development, conservation, and utilization of the natural resources of national forest and associated lands of the Ranger District.

Resource Management

The management of the Los Padres National Forest's resources is divided into seven programs: wildlife, fish, and rare plants; vegetation; watershed, air and geologic resources; heritage resources; specially designated areas (including wilderness); lands ownership; and managing the data of these resources.

Wildlife, Fish and Plant Management: The focus of the Wildlife Management Program is the management of habitats for game and non-game species and protection of plant and animal habitats and species. Emphasis is given to the management of federally listed threatened and endangered species, as well as Region 5 designated sensitive plants and animals. Activities in this program include: the development and maintenance of partnerships with national, state and local agencies to establish and maintain species habitat goals; the integration of habitat planning into land management and project plans; and the improvement and maintenance of wildlife and fish habitat.

Wildlife management is focused on maintaining or improving habitat capability (WL 1 - Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate, and Sensitive Species Management and WL 2 - Wildlife, Fish and Plant Habitat Management), removing invasive species (IS 1 - Invasive and Nonnative Species Prevention and Control), and reducing conflicts with other activities (REC 2 - Sustainable Use and Environmental Design and Lands 2 - Non-Recreation Special Use Authorizations). There is also an emphasis on minimizing habitat loss and fragmentation through the conservation and management of habitat linkages within and, where possible, between the national forests and other public and privately conserved lands (Lands 1 - Land Ownership Adjustment). Program managers expect to implement one to two recovery tasks per year (WL 1 - Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate, and Sensitive Species Management) and accomplish 200-300 acres of habitat restoration per year (WL 2 - Wildlife, Fish and Plant Habitat Management). The national forest is placing a high priority on preventing and controlling nonnative species that prey on or compete with threatened and endangered fish and wildlife (IS 1 - Invasive and Nonnative Species Prevention and Control). The national forest expects to implement control measures on an average of 250 acres per year in areas where invasive plants and animals are known to be adversely affecting listed species. There will be emphasis on improving our knowledge base regarding threatened and endangered species through basic inventory of suitable habitat, focused on surveys of non-wilderness areas (AM 2 - Forest-wide Inventory). Managers also expect to increase emphasis on maintenance and restoration of habitat in areas where high-use recreation and threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species coincide (WL 1 - Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate, and Sensitive Species Management and REC 2 - Sustainable Use and Environmental Design).

Fish crew at Prewitt Creek

Vegetation management is carried out to maintain healthy forest ecosystems, protect critical habitats, to reduce fire and erosion risks, and to replant burned or otherwise damaged vegetation. The national forest Restoration Program incorporates an integrated set of vegetation management actions designed to meet multiple objectives including restoration of forest health and community protection. Close coordination between the fire, fuels and aviation management staff and resource management staff is required. The national forest has identified the following vegetation management project categories related to community protection and forest health:

- **Mortality Removal - Annual Need: 100 acres.** This includes the removal of dead vegetation to reduce fire hazard. This category includes the use of timber sales to remove merchantable trees, and the contract removal of non-merchantable trees and shrubs.

These projects include treatment of all slash and are expected to move forested areas from Condition Class 3 towards Condition Class 1 (see Part 1-Vision, Forest Goal 1.2 - Restoration of Forest Health). In chaparral areas, mortality removal is planned in order to reduce the fire hazard from high to low.

- **Thinning - Annual Need: 400 acres.** This includes the removal of living trees from overstocked stands, in most cases trees of 24 inches in diameter or less. These projects include the treatment of all slash and are expected to move forested areas from Condition Class 2 or 3 towards Condition Class 1. Thinning is required prior to the reintroduction of fire in most cases.
- **Reforestation And Restoration Of Forest Vegetation - Annual Need: 100 acres.** Restoration projects are either designed to facilitate natural recovery following disturbance (fire, drought related mortality, insect and disease) or to implement planting projects as needed when natural processes are not likely to achieve desires results.
- **Fuelbreak Maintenance - Annual Need: 1,000 acres.** Existing fuelbreaks are generally maintained using prescribed fire, grazing, or mechanical methods. Most of the fuelbreaks are in high-hazard chaparral areas and are designed to limit wildland fire size and provide firefighter access and improved firefighter safety. A few of the fuelbreaks are in coniferous forest and serve to limit fire spread from or towards communities or timber stands in poor condition. Most of the existing fuelbreaks are on ridgetops or along roads.
- **Fuelbreak Construction - Annual Need: 400 acres.** Most of the planned fuelbreaks are also along roads and ridgetops and are proposed for limiting the spread of wildland fire. Most fuelbreaks are constructed with mechanized equipment. Some are built by hand or by using prescribed fire. Herbicides may be used to kill resprouting chaparral and then fire is used to maintain the fuelbreak over time. Fuelbreaks are sometimes constructed near communities to provide some level of future protection in cases where land ownership patterns or topography limit the applicability of the Wildland/Urban Interface Defense and Threat Zones concept.
- **Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) Defense and Threat Zones- Annual Need: 3,500 acres (Defense 1,500, Threat 2,000).** A WUI Defense Zone is a relatively narrow area in width (see standards S7 and S8 in Part 3) directly adjoining structures that is converted to a less flammable state to increase defensible space and firefighter safety. A secondary zone (the WUI Threat Zone, see standard S7 in Part 3) is an additional strip of vegetation modified to reduce flame heights and radiant heat. The two zones together are designed to make most structures defensible. These zones are applicable to national forest lands only and are applicable to structures on public land and can also be applied where national forest boundaries are directly adjacent to communities on private lands. Techniques may include hand or machine removal of vegetation and the use of herbicides in the WUI Defense Zone. Treatments in the WUI Threat Zone are less intensive and can generally be maintained with prescribed fire over the long-term. In forested areas, extensive tree thinning is planned as part of installing WUI Threat Zones.
- **Prescribed (Rx) Fire - Annual Need: 10,000 acres.** Projects placed in this category are generally large burns in chaparral to reduce fire hazard near communities or as part of an overall landscape mosaic designed to limit the spread of wildland fire. Prescribed fire is also used to help restore and maintain lands in the coniferous forest areas, currently

categorized as Condition Class 1 or 2 (see Part 1-Vision, Forest Goal 1.2 - Restoration of Forest Health). Some prescribed burns are conducted for the purpose of enhancing multiple resource benefits.

Projects often incorporate a combination of these activities designed to most effectively meet site-specific objectives.

Stands such as this one have had treatments such as thinning and burning for forest health reasons.

The Los Padres National Forest was established to protect the watersheds that supply water to local communities and municipalities. The Soil and Watershed Program cooperates with various water agencies and other national forest functional areas to assure maintenance of high quality water for the various users and natural resources through the application of Best Management Practices in all Forest Service activities (WAT 1 - Watershed Function). The program also involves restoration of damaged watersheds through soil and watershed improvement projects (WAT 1 - Watershed Function, WAT 3 - Hazardous Materials). Maintaining water rights for national forest management through the State water rights process is another important activity (WAT 2 - Water Management). The Geology Program applies the engineering characteristics of soil and rock materials, and the flow and occurrence properties of groundwater and surface water to reduce geologic hazards for fuels projects, recreation developments, burned area rehabilitation, and watershed management. It also applies earth science principles to protect and interpret geologic resources. The Geology Program emphasis is to identify and mitigate landslide and other geologic hazards (AM 2 – Forest-wide Inventory), analyze groundwater resources for

sustainable development (WAT 1 - Watershed Function, and WAT 2 - Water Management), reduce environmental impacts from unstable or poorly drained roads, improve watershed restoration and mine reclamation (WAT 1 - Watershed Function), and identify how geologic resources and hazards influence human, plant and animal habitats. The Air Resources Program cooperates with state and local air pollution control authorities to gain approval for important air quality related national forest activities, such as prescribed fire, mining and recreation. This program also encourages and helps direct research studies on the impacts of air pollution on national forest resources. The program will emphasize prescribe fire smoke management techniques and working with control authorities to recognize the long-term trade offs between prescribed fire and wildland fire (Air 1 - Minimize Smoke and Dust, Air 2 - Forest Air Quality Emissions). The impacts of Ozone and Nitrogen on forest terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems will continue to be evaluated. Human health risks will be considered in all approved activities including prescribed fire by meeting the smoke management requirements of State Title 17, federal and local air quality permitting authorities. Clean Air Act visibility monitoring will continue with the operation of the national IMPROVE network and photographic view cameras. The overall Physical Resources Program emphasis will be three fold: 1) support and help facilitate fuels and vegetation management efforts designed to maintain or restore watershed health and protect life and property (WAT 1 - Watershed Function); 2) repair soil and watershed degradation; and 3) provide burned area emergency rehabilitation treatments after wildland fires to reduce potential flood damage to downstream resources and communities (WAT 1 - Watershed Function).

The Lands Program handles land exchanges and purchases, rights-of-way acquisitions, and boundary and title management. In addition to completing their own projects, resource staff provide significant support to other program areas.

The Heritage Resource Program area has the mission to protect significant heritage resources, to share their values with the American people, and to contribute relevant information and perspectives to natural resource management so that future generations will have an opportunity to discover the human history of the national forest.

Table 2.3.5. Resource Management Performance Indicators, LPNF

Performance Indicators for Resource Management	Current Level	Estimated Forest Capability and Need
Acres of Terrestrial Habitat Enhanced	94	1,000
Miles of Aquatic Habitat Enhanced	3	25
Acres of Noxious Weeds Treated	75	225
Acres of Vegetation Improved (Timber Stand Improvement)	47	500
Acres of Watershed Improved	9	60
Acres of Land Ownership Adjusted	0	160
Number of Heritage Resources Managed to Standard	65	77

Public Use and Enjoyment

The public use and enjoyment function consists of those national forest operations that interact with the visiting public. It includes programs directly related to the visitor's national forest experience (such as interpretation, education, concessions and community outreach), as well as their overall safety and protection. As such, interpretive and law enforcement staff work together to provide an enriching environment.

Interpretation is an educational activity that reveals meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media rather than simply to communicate factual information. The Los Padres National Forest has rich geologic, wildlife and Native American history to interpret for its visitors and a variety of programs to do so. Community outreach includes activities that encourage the stewardship of national forest lands through the participation of people from local areas. These efforts lead to sustainable recreation within the national forest, improve visitor services and increase opportunities for interpretation and environmental education through expanded partnerships with permittees, volunteers, ethnic community organizations and other organizations.

Interpretive program, Los Padres NF

Conservation education imparts knowledge about the Forest Service's mission and policy, environmental features of interest, and behaviors that preserve and respect the environment. When the Forest Service expands outreach to local communities, including nontraditional audiences, it is for the purpose of increasing visitor enjoyment and understanding of the national forest and encouraging appropriate behavior. Coordinate with other southern California national forests to expand outreach to larger metropolitan audiences. National Forest staff expect to increase partnership participation by approximately 20 percent (see also: Her 2 - Public Involvement Program; and REC 4 - Conservation Education).

Law enforcement services are an integral part of the Forest Service’s day-to-day management. These services include the administration of permits and contracts, the dissemination of visitor information regarding the use of national forest lands, and the enforcement of the rules and regulations that govern the management of the national forest. The authority for providing law enforcement services is described at 16 USC 551 and 559. The means to implement these authorities are found in 36 CFR 261 and Title 18 of the United States Code. Visitor safety and resource protection activities are accomplished using law enforcement officers working at three different levels. These are: (1) Forest Protection Officers are primarily responsible for public contact in the field, public information and education efforts and they have the authority to write citations. This level of enforcement focuses on the prevention of violations when in the field. (2) Law Enforcement Officers are responsible for the prevention of crimes and the enforcement of

federal laws and regulations on national forest and adjacent land. These officers carry firearms and can make arrests. (3) Special Agents are the investigative arm of the agency and are responsible for the staff work related to the arrest and prosecution of criminals and for the development of reports that address claims made for and against the government.

The Campgrounds Program encompasses the care and maintenance of the national forest's 122 campgrounds. The largest and most highly used facilities are operated by concessionaires. Maintenance includes two major categories: routine maintenance and deferred maintenance. Routine maintenance work includes cleaning and repairing restrooms, picnic tables, fire rings and grills, signs, renting portable toilets, pumping vault toilets, removing graffiti from facilities and natural features, testing and maintaining water systems, posting kiosks with current information, and picking up and hauling trash. Deferred maintenance includes major repair and/or replacement of constructed features such as kiosks, water systems, toilets, picnic tables, grills, and fire rings due to lack of routine maintenance.

Despite the developed site infrastructure provided by the national forest, many visitors like to congregate in undeveloped areas, such as road turnouts or along creeks which have few to no facilities. Concentrated Use Area (CUA)-based activities include hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, scenery viewing, picnicking, camping, snowplay, and waterplay. Facilities in these areas are limited to portable toilets (often seasonally placed), trash cans, signs and kiosks. These facilities require cleaning, pumping, graffiti removal, and repair of vandalism. Increased patrols are necessary due to the concentrated visitor use, which often results in impacts such as litter, soil compaction, and erosion.

Scenic All American Road Highway 1 and paragliders, Big Sur Place

Wilderness is managed to maintain and improve the wilderness resource and its open space value; and monitoring wilderness conditions such as visitor use, campsite and trail conditions. Attention focuses on the social, ecological and managerial conditions of the wilderness. To address social conditions, attention focuses on party size, stay limits, campsite carrying capacity, and encounter levels. To address ecological conditions, attention focuses on wildland fire, air quality, and invasive species. To address managerial conditions, attention focuses on structures, and outfitters and guides.

Many types of recreation special-use authorizations, such as recreation residences, organization camps, outfitters and guides, recreation events, motorcycle enduros, and other activities provide a varied recreation opportunity to the public.

The national forest provides balanced, environmentally sustainable recreation opportunities to meet the needs of a growing, urban, culturally diverse population. Community outreach efforts lead to an involved citizen population that is representative of the communities the Forest Service serves. Adaptive management measures are applied to all high-use recreation areas and developed sites that have conflicts among users and/or with sensitive resources. Dispersed camping will continue outside of restricted use areas; keeping vehicles within fifty feet of classified roads (as identified on the forest map) (see also: REC 1 - Recreation Opportunity; REC 2 - Sustainable Use and Environmental Design; and REC 3 - Recreation Participation).

Recreation special-uses (e.g., concession campgrounds, organization camps, recreation events, and outfitter-guides) are part of an important program that will be emphasized to address growing demand. Complete recreation residence permits consistency review and continuation determination process by 2008.

Investment emphasis focuses on Forest Service recreation facilities and related infrastructure. Opportunities are developed through partnerships and special funding to reduce the backlog of facility maintenance and to expand capacity. Develop recreation infrastructure to guide use away from resource and social conflict. This is accomplished through creation of new sites and the decommissioning of existing sites. Reduce the facilities maintenance backlog by two sites per year (see also: Fac 1 - Facilities Maintenance Backlog).

Recreational target shooting is restricted to designated areas with an emphasis on ranges under special-use authorizations. Hunting will continue as regulated by state law.

Scenic resources emphasize conserving or restoring aesthetic, recreation, and open space values, especially those of high-valued scenery, such as scenic byways and backdrops for local communities (see also: REC 1 - Recreation Opportunity; LM 1 - Landscape Aesthetics; LM 2 - Landscape Restoration; and LM 3 - Landscape Character).

Table 2.3.6. Public Use and Enjoyment Performance Indicators, LPNF

Performance Indicators for Public Use and Enjoyment	Current Level	Estimated Forest Capability and Need
Products Provided to Standard (Interpretation and Education)	76	95
Recreation Special Use Authorizations Administered to Standard	98	210
PAOT Days Managed to Standard (Developed Sites)	1,133,111	3,629,884

Facilities Operation and Maintenance

Buildings, Grounds & Utilities: Facility Operations and Maintenance (FOM) encompass all activities that operate and maintain the national forest's infrastructure. This includes not only buildings, campgrounds and other facilities, but also trails and roads. The Buildings Program area includes operating approximately 270 structures located within the national forest's 55 administrative sites, as well as utility systems including generators, water systems, wastewater systems and solar electric systems.

Administrative facilities (i.e., offices, storage, warehouses, garages, visitor centers, communications, etc.) shall be provided and maintained so as to:

- Provide safe and functional workspace.
- Support the Built Environment Image Guide concept in the design and construction of buildings to improve the image, aesthetics, sustainability, and overall quality of Forest Service facilities.
- Provide for the effective and efficient protection and management of the national forest by location and design of buildings.
- Provide for facilities and related infrastructure that is maintained and operated in compliance with federal, state and local rules, codes and regulations.

Los Prietos ranger station

Maintain a Forest Facilities Master Plan. This plan will identify acquisition, conveyance, maintenance, decommissioning and disposal needs and priorities for Forest Service owned structures. Housing facilities for employees may be provided when necessary to meet the national forest's mission, when insufficient acceptable private sector facilities are available, or when recruitment and retention of a highly qualified workforce is severely constrained as a result of local high cost and availability of acceptable housing (see also: Fac 1 - Facilities Maintenance Backlog).

Roads: Considering that the Los Padres National Forest is spread across 220 linear miles of central California, it is not surprising that it contains over 1,500 miles of roads (paved and non-paved), which is still a very low density in terms of miles of road per square mile. Activities include grading unpaved roads, clearing rock fall, repairing potholes, signage, striping, resurfacing, and bridge maintenance.

Management of the transportation system emphasizes user demand, national forest and community fire protection needs, and resource considerations. Implement the procedures and process of the forest-scale roads analysis process. Roads and trails are maintained, reconstructed or relocated to reduce the effects to species, watersheds, and heritage sites while safely accommodating use. Annually maintain 10 percent of National Forest System roads to their operational maintenance level. Designate routes for motorized use. Allow mechanized use (e.g., mountain bikes) only on designated routes. Work with communities to evaluate suitability of unauthorized trails. Work with communities in areas where user conflicts and/or resource damage occurs. The national forest expects to average approximately 50 miles of trail maintenance annually (see also: REC 3 - Recreation Participation; Trans 1 - Transportation System; Trans 3 - Improve Trails; and Trans 4 - Off-Highway Vehicle Opportunities).

Evaluate roads accommodating high levels of use for improvement, including parking in appropriate locations for popular destinations. Develop or improve five trailheads annually to access the national forest (see also: Trans 1 - Transportation System).

Trails: A 1,238-mile trail system is also a direct result of the national forest’s large size. Trail planners emphasize providing loop trails and connecting trails to enhance trail opportunities and minimize resource damage.

Decommissioning of unneeded or unclassified roads and trails where environmental conflicts occur is emphasized. Initiate site-specific analysis on approximately 30 percent of the unclassified roads to make appropriate designations (National Forest System road, decommission or National Forest System trail, either motorized or non-motorized) (see also: Trans 2 - Unnecessary Roads).

Access to the national forests is acquired where needed for administrative and public use through purchase, exchange, easements, and rights-of-way. Program emphasis will be on the development and maintenance of roads and trails systems that address access issues and minimize conflicts with private landowners (see also: Lands 1 - Land Ownership Adjustment).

Coordinate management of the national forest transportation system with other public and private transportation system agencies. Integrate transportation needs and information to provide for a seamless transportation system from communities to the national forests. Maximize participation, where appropriate and consistent with management direction, with federally funded highway programs including national forest highways, public National Forest System roads, alternative transportation, Scenic Byways, etc., to improve or enhance public use of National Forest System land. As appropriate use agreements or permits with cooperators, public road agencies, and commercial users to define maintenance responsibilities and accomplish maintenance in the most efficient manner (see also: Trans 1 - Transportation System).

Table 2.3.7. Facilities Operations and Maintenance Performance Indicators, LPNF

Performance Indicators for Facility Operations and Maintenance	Current Level	Estimated Forest Capability and Need
Miles of Passenger Car Roads Maintained to Objective Maintenance Level	36	441
Miles of High Clearance & Back Country Roads Maintained to Objective Maintenance Level	54	677
Miles of Road Decommissioned	1	8
Miles of Trail Operated and Maintained to Standard	34	245

Commodity and Commercial Uses

The largest program in this functional area is the administration of approximately 600 non-recreation land uses. These uses can include agricultural (orchards and apiaries); service uses (schools, parking lots); hydroelectric facilities; non-hydroelectric dams and reservoirs; research facilities (weather stations, observatories); power generation and transmission facilities; oil and gas development facilities of existing leases; electric transmission and distribution lines; electronic sites; and water improvements (waterlines, wells).

Sespe oil field, Los Padres NF

Communication tower, Los Padres NF

Demand for infrastructure to provide water, energy, transportation, and other community support needs continues to receive focus. Program emphasis is on managing these uses while preserving recreation opportunities and resolving natural resource conflicts. Managers expect to annually reduce backlog of special-use authorizations by approximately five percent (see also Lands 2 - Non-Recreation Special Use Authorizations).

The Los Padres National Forest contains the only developed commercial quantities of oil and gas within the California national forests. There are 21 oil and gas leases on 5,642 acres (less than 1 percent of national forest land) that contain about 180 wells and associated facilities. There are also several active hard rock (e.g., gold) claims and small amounts of mineral material (e.g., sand and gravel) activity.

Additional development of oil and gas on the Los Padres National Forest will proceed only as specified by the decision from the Oil and Gas EIS. Permits for exploration, development, and operation of additional oil and gas facilities, such as wells, roads, tanks, pipelines, etc. are subject to further site-specific environmental study and NEPA review and will incorporate all stipulations and geographic restrictions specified by the Record of Decision for the Oil and Gas EIS (see also: ME 1 - Minerals Management; and ME 2 - Biomass Utilization).

The Livestock Grazing Program on the Los Padres National Forest currently consists of 141 livestock grazing areas, of which 101 are active. The national forest manages this program for the sustainability of forest resources while providing for livestock forage. The Livestock Grazing Program emphasizes compliance with the Rescission Act of 1995. Priority is given to reviewing allotments where there are known impacts on natural resources or recreation use (see also LG 1 - Livestock Grazing and LG 2 - Rangeland Health).

The national forest provides forest products to the public including fuelwood, Christmas trees, posts, and other plant materials and is expected to continue at or above current levels. The production of biomass is potentially useful for management of vegetation to achieve desired conditions (see also: SFP 1 - Offer Special Forest Products).

Table 2.3.8. Commodities and Commercial Uses Performance Indicators, LPNF

Performance Indicators for Commodity and Commercial Uses	Current Level	Estimated Forest Capability and Need
Land Use Authorizations Administered to Standard	43	106
Number of Mineral Operations Administered	164	210
Manage Grazing Allotments (acres)	1,080	8,000
Forest Products	400	1,000

Fire Management

The national forest's Fire Program is guided by the Fire Management Plan, which is updated annually. The Fire Program on the Los Padres National Forest is supported by approximately 350 permanent and temporary personnel and is comprised of four main functions:

- management and administration
- fire prevention
- wildland fire suppression and preparedness
- hazardous fuels program

Management and administration provides for direction and oversight of all fire management activities including fighting forest fires, adhering to approved employee safety practices, community protection and forest health projects, educating the public and responding to inquiries. An Emergency Command Center coordinates fire activities throughout the year.

Primary pre-suppression activities include fire prevention, maintaining fire suppression equipment, fire suppression training and first aid training. Fire prevention activities focus on four primary areas: fire prevention engineering, education, community preparedness, and enforcement. Education includes Smokey Bear programs to instill a fire prevention ethic in school children and Firewise community programs that target civic and homeowner groups. Engineering includes abatement of fire hazard along roadways and in high-use areas. Enforcement includes execution of county, state, and federal fire laws regarding fire related violations and hazard abatement around structures on both public and private lands in the national forest.

Los Padres firefighter uses drip torch on Alamo prescribed burn.

Wildland fire suppression and preparedness encompass all firefighting activities included in containing and mitigating the damages of wildland fires, caused by either natural or human means. Fire crews and disaster teams supported by this program also respond to other areas of the country to help with wildland fires and disasters. Fire suppression resources on the Los Padres National Forest include fire engine modules, 20-person hand crews, helicopters, fixed wing aircraft, fire prevention personnel, bulldozers, and water tenders.

Frequently, Los Padres National Forest fire personnel are called to fight fires on other national forests and assist in mitigating the effects from other disasters, such as earthquakes or terrorist activity. However, most of these assignments relate to fighting large forest fires in the United States. In addition to supporting large suppression operations nationally, other types of assignments come via the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Past assignments have included earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, 9/11 disaster support, wildland fires in Australia, and supervision of the Columbia Space Shuttle debris recovery.

The fourth element of the Fire Program is hazardous fuels. Hazardous fuels include chaparral and all other vegetation types that are susceptible to carrying a fire. The Fuels Program is accomplished through vegetation treatments to restore the plant community to the desired fire regime while protecting urban communities and resource values. Fuels management consists of planning and evaluating national forest conditions, prescribed burns, and the mechanical removal of hazardous material in high-risk areas.

To safely reintroduce fire into the ecosystem, land managers conduct prescribed burns that are intentionally ignited by experts under carefully monitored weather and fuel conditions. Prescribed fires clear dead, dry plant and chaparral material; improve conditions for wildlife; and protect water sources from erosion caused by wildland fire.

All wildland fires burning on southern California National Forest System land are considered a threat to communities. Under severe burning conditions, a wildland fire burning in the Back Country or wilderness can be a threat to one of the many at-risk mountain or foothill communities within one burn period. Aggressive fire suppression and prevention strategies are

implemented throughout the national forest to achieve the objectives of protecting life, property and natural resources. Maintain cooperative relationships vital to fire and fuels management effectiveness. Maintain the suppression organization at 95 percent of the most efficient level or higher, subject to annual funding (see also: Fire 1 - Fire Prevention; Fire 3 - Fire Suppression Emphasis; and Fire 4 - Firefighter and Public Safety).

Prescribed burning treatment, Los Padres NF.

Vegetative treatments will be strategically integrated to maximize community protection efforts and minimize wildland fire size, while considering habitat needs. Annually review and implement the national forest's five-year fuels strategy (see also: Fire 2 - Direct Community Protection; Fire 5 - Fuelbreaks and Indirect Community Protection; and FH 3 - Restoration of Forest Health).

Table 2.3.9. Fire and Aviation Management Performance Indicators, LPNF

Performance Indicator for Aviation and Fire Management	Current Level	Estimated Forest Capability and Need
Acres of Hazardous Fuel Reduction	6,700	13,700

Place-Based Program Emphasis

The national forest has been divided into a series of geographical units called 'Places.' Each Place has its own landscape character. Landscape character has been described as an overall visual and cultural impression of landscape attributes, the physical appearance and cultural context of a landscape that gives it an identity and 'sense of place.'

Each Place has a theme, setting, desired condition, and program emphasis section.

- Theme - refers to images of the landscape that can be defined with a brief set of physical, visual or cultural attributes that encapsulate the sense of place.
- Setting - provides a description of the landscape character of the Place. The approximate number of acres of special designation overlays that are found in each place are listed in this section.
- Desired Condition - paints a picture of what the Place could be as the national forest implements activities to move toward the overall forest-wide desired conditions.
- Program Emphasis - identifies priority activities the national forest will emphasize in the next three to five years.

These are the Places identified for the Los Padres National Forest:

- Arroyo Seco (70,742 acres)
- Avenales (57,557 acres)
- Big Sur (82,718 acres)
- Black Mountain (17,083 acres)
- Colson (43,345 acres)
- Cuesta (42,187 acres)
- Cuyama-Highway 166 Front (122,440 acres)
- Figueroa-Santa Ynez (84,998 acres)
- Highway 33 Corridor (109,150 acres)
- Hungry Valley/Mutau (77,701 acres)
- Mt. Pinos (153,454 acres)
- Ojai-Piru Front Country (59,454 acres)
- Pozo/La Panza (17,175 acres)
- Rockfront (17,659 acres)
- San Rafael (388,669 acres)
- Santa Barbara Front (57,161 acres)
- Sespe (218,657 acres)
- Ventana (161,214 acres)

Arroyo Seco

Theme: A deep-river gorge landscape offering developed family waterplay next to an undisturbed, remote wilderness.

Setting: The Arroyo Seco Place in the eastern portion of the Monterey Ranger District includes the Arroyo Seco Recreation Area in the northwest corner of the Place, and to the south, the Arroyo Seco River and its gorge. East of the Arroyo Seco River, about two-thirds of the northern part of the Place is in the Ventana Wilderness. The southern one-third is adjacent to the Fort Hunter-Liggett military reservation. The Arroyo Seco River, with its recreation area, its unique gorge, and its remote and rugged features is the dominant feature along the eastern boundary of the Place.

Junipero Serra Peak has an isolated montane mixed conifer forest at its summit. South of the wilderness (along County Road 4050) there are excellent woodlands and savannas composed of three oak species including monarch valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*). In fact, the candidate Valley Oak Research Natural Area at the boundary of the national forest and military reservation is one of the few examples of intact valley oak woodlands on public lands in the state.

In addition to the geologically unique and scenic inner gorge of the Arroyo Seco River, another notable geologic feature is 'the rocks,' a formation that extends west from Reliz Canyon. Included in this collection of rock outcrops is 'Wagon Caves.'

With the exception of the Arroyo Seco Recreation Area, which is accessible via County Road G16, the Place is 90 percent wilderness and largely undeveloped. In fact, most of the Arroyo Seco Place has no access, especially along the northern and eastern boundaries of the national forest. The Arroyo Seco/Indians Road (3050) is a major travel route that connects the Arroyo Seco Recreation Area to the Indians area and then continues through Hunter-Liggett and the San Antonio Mission. This road bisects the eastern and western portions of the Ventana Wilderness and offers outstanding vistas of the river's inner gorge. The road also provides

access to the wild, western portion of the wilderness via a crossing near Escondido and Santa Lucia Memorial Campgrounds.

The Arroyo Seco River draws visitors from the nearby valley communities of King City, Greenfield, and Salinas and serves as a refuge from the hot, dry valley summers. By contrast, coastal visitors from as far away as San Jose and Santa Cruz visit the area to escape summer fog and to enjoy the remote setting. High-quality developed recreation is being provided at the Arroyo Seco Recreation Area. The recreation area offers a spectrum of activities including camping, hiking, and waterplay and represents a major recreation contribution to nearby communities. With its inclusion of 58,278 acres of Ventana Wilderness, this Place provides an unusual contrast of concentrated use in the Arroyo Seco facility and the solitude of the rugged Ventana Wilderness.

The perennial Arroyo Seco River is a wild and scenic river candidate that is fed by isolated, rugged tributaries and is a steelhead trout spawning tributary of the Salinas River. It features a precipitous gorge that is seasonally accessible by the Arroyo Seco/Indians Road. The Arroyo Seco/Indians Road offers views of the Arroyo Seco River as it flows from the Indians Area.

Near the Arroyo Seco Recreation Area, an old, adobe building that was the first Ranger Station in the area still stands; it is the only Forest Service adobe structure in California. More generally, the Arroyo Seco Place is historically rich. The Indians Area is also the site of summer recreation residences. Hiking and driving for pleasure on the few roads in the area reward the visitor with spectacular wildflower displays.

The area has traditional importance to Native Americans; ceremonial and gathering activities still occur at numerous sites. Both Junipero Serra Peak and the Arroyo Seco Inner Gorge have sacred significance to Native Americans. The Wagon Caves Area has been recommended as a Special Interest Cultural Area to be protected as a valuable historic site.

Recommended Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- Arroyo Seco River 15.1 miles

Existing Wilderness:

- Ventana Wilderness 58,262 acres

Special Interest Area:

- Milpitas 8,995 acres

Recommended Research Natural Area:

- Valley Oak 108 acres

Total national forest acres--Arroyo Seco Place: 70,742

Desired Condition: Arroyo Seco/Indians Place is maintained as a naturally evolving and natural appearing landscape that functions as a wilderness entry. It provides developed recreation opportunities adjacent to the river at the Arroyo Seco Recreation Area. The valued landscape attributes to be preserved over time are the mosaic patterns of the vegetation; the free-flow of the river; aquatic species habitat; and the opportunities for touring that interpret the cultural history

of the area. Communication systems provide for public and employee safety and other administrative uses. Coordination with Fort Hunter Liggett is maintained and improved.

Program Emphasis: Maintain and enhance the unique water-based recreation experience along the Arroyo Seco River while mitigating any affects of visitor use within this steelhead trout watershed. This mitigation may include limiting the number of visitors and/or restrictions on seasonal use of sensitive habitat areas to minimize potential affects. Emphasize vegetative management in the Wildland/Urban Interface including fuels management within adjoining areas of wilderness. Protect, maintain and enhance important historic structures. Maintain facilities at the Arroyo Seco Recreation Area to improve administrative support. Increase visitor education and opportunities relative to the habitat needs of sensitive biological resources and the protection and management of the natural and cultural resources along the river. Maintain and enhance access to the Ventana Wilderness where feasible. Improve communications facilities to provide wider coverage across the district to improve employee and public safety. This could include installation of a Forest Service radio repeater on either Junipero Serra or Pinyon Peak. Look for opportunities to coordinate resource management with Fort Hunter Liggett and to meet housing and administrative needs.

Avenales

Theme: Rural ranching within a cultural landscape of rolling blue oak and valley oak woodlands and savannas. Grazing is a major activity within this Place, as well as primitive recreation in the two wilderness areas.

Setting: The rural and isolated landscape of the Avenales Place is made up of mountains and low hills that are bisected by a well-developed valley adjacent to the upper Salinas River. The valley bottom, including the river is predominantly privately owned but flanked on both sides by the public lands in the rugged La Panza Range and Garcia Mountain. The Salinas River and Alamo Creek originate in watersheds feeding the valley. The valley separates the Garcia Wilderness that covers most of the southeast trending Garcia Mountain from the Machesna Mountain Wilderness that occupies the midsection of the La Panza Range. The American Canyon Research Natural Area is nested within the Machesna Mountain Wilderness.

Valley vegetation includes annual grasslands and extensive blue oak (Quercus douglasii) and valley oak (Quercus lobata) woodlands and savannas. Blue oak woodlands and forests extend onto public lands, especially in American Canyon, Los Machos Hills, around Stony Creek and near the Avenales Observation Point. The riparian corridor along the Salinas River is lined with open Fremont cottonwood (Populus fremontii) and willow woodlands. Upland mountainous terrain is clothed almost entirely in chaparral. The American Canyon RNA protects the best examples of Coulter pine (Pinus coulteri)/chaparral forests and woodlands on the central coast.

Blue oak woodlands are vital wildlife habitat and support a wide variety of vertebrate species. Historically, owners of the Avenales Ranch, in cooperation with California Department of Fish and Game, introduced a herd of tule elk (Cervus elaphus nannodes) that now range onto National Forest System lands. Castle Crag, a looming rock outcrop on the edge of the Machesna Mountain Wilderness is a historic California condor (Gymnogyps californianus) nesting site, and more recently the site of successful condor reintroductions.

The Avenales Place has limited public access. Seasonal access to American Canyon

Campground is afforded to the public during deer hunting season. Off-highway vehicle trails skirt the periphery of the Machesna Wilderness and Garcia Wilderness and provide jumping off points for hikers. Many of the trails within the wilderness are overgrown, and access can be blocked by private land. Some existing and old roads on national forest land in the Place have erosion problems.

The area is managed primarily for livestock grazing (nine allotments are under permit), dispersed recreation, hunting, heritage resources and historic sites. Recreation use is generally low because the Place is not readily accessible by designated trails or roads. Infrastructure for nearby urban areas includes electrical power lines that cross the Place and communication sites on Las Pilitas Mountain.

Existing Wilderness:

- Garcia Wilderness 13,933 acres
- Machesna Mountain Wilderness 18,304 acres

Existing Research Natural Area:

- American Canyon 1,529 acres

All acreages shown are within the Place.

Total national forest acres--Avenales Place: 57,557

Desired Condition: Avenales Place is a pastoral, naturally evolving landscape that functions as wilderness and ranchland grazing areas. There are natural habitats within oak-grasslands and the Coulter pine-chaparral forested areas. Non-motorized access is improved.

Program Emphasis: Maintain relationships with adjacent private landowners. Maintain livestock grazing opportunities. Improve non-motorized trails within the Place. Improve access to the Place in a way that does not generate conflicts between uses. Reduce erosion generated from roads. Maintain protection of the peregrine falcon and California condor nesting and roosting habitats.

Big Sur

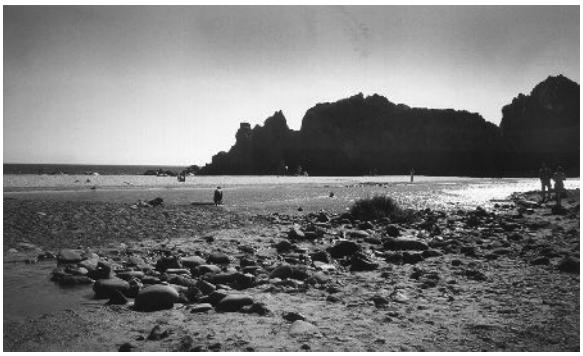
Theme: An international destination defined by spectacular land-ocean interface scenery. It is one of the 'Key Places' representing the most picturesque national forest locations, containing its own landscape character. The natural landscape, including the fog-shrouded, windswept, rugged coastline and diverse coastal vegetation is exemplified by an independent, eclectic use of natural materials that create the image of the Place and the spirit of the people. Big Sur abuts against the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and is valued as a touring corridor that provides access to the Ventana and Silver Peak Wildernesses, the Big Sur Wild and Scenic River, and postcard natural images.

Setting: The Big Sur Place is a long, narrow coastal strip of land along the western edge of the Santa Lucia Range. California State Highway 1 (also known as the Cabrillo Highway) is part of the California Scenic Highway System, and an 'All American Road.' It is a favorite touring destination for regional and international visitors. The communities of Monterey, Big Sur, San Simeon, and Cambria are gathering places for visitors and serve as the portals to touring, hiking, and destinations, such as the Hearst Castle at San Simeon. California State Highway 1 traverses the length of this Place, winding in and out of the narrow canyons and hugging steep cliffs above the rugged Pacific Ocean coastline.

Most of the Place is remote, undeveloped, and relatively inaccessible. Approximately half of the Place is within the Silver Peak and Ventana Wildernesses and serves as a gateway to other portions of these areas of wilderness and the Wild and Scenic Big Sur River. Despite its remoteness, there are numerous trails that provide access to the Ventana and Silver Peak Wildernesses.

Other than wilderness, numerous special designations are found within the Big Sur Place. The Cone Peak Gradient Research Natural Area (established in 1987) provides research opportunities in a mixed evergreen forest. Three Special Interest Areas (SIAs) exhibit rare and exemplary botanical values. The Alder Creek and Lion Den Springs SIAs boast groves of endemic Sargent cypress, and the Southern Redwood SIA is home to the southernmost stand of natural redwoods.

Pfeiffer Beach



Dramatic, steep, unstable oceanfront slopes are synonymous with the Big Sur landscape. Narrow marine terraces with hidden coves and beaches occur along some stretches of the shoreline and serve as a testament to changes in sea level over geologic time. Rounded ridge-tops with steep, rugged, side-slopes characterize the mountains that reach from sea level to 6,000 feet over short

distances, creating dramatic contrasts of color, texture and scale. The ocean edge is juxtaposed to this mountainous landscape and creates spectacular scenery around every turn in the road. Water runs off this area quickly, creating many small streams and several rivers with dramatic waterfalls.

Although largely covered by chaparral, coastal sage scrub and prairies, the Big Sur Place is noted for the southernmost stands of coast redwoods in a vegetative mosaic of pine, mixed evergreen forest, and riparian vegetation. Coastal fog, spring wildflowers, coastal prairies, coastal sage scrub and chaparral offer seasonal contrasts of color and viewing distances that make this an area to visit many times. One can also see terrestrial and marine mammals, pelagic life, and land birds in this land to ocean interface. As a transition zone between northern and southern California floras, and as an interface between land and marine environments, it is an area of unusually high biodiversity. Many of the coastal streams provide habitat for federally listed steelhead trout (*Oncorhyncus mykiss irideus*), an oceangoing rainbow trout. The ridges of the Santa Lucia Mountains supply roosting and feeding habitat for California condors that soar in the thermals created by the steep, ocean-facing terrain.

The integrity of the landscape is primarily affected by construction and maintenance of California State Highway 1 on land that is constantly shifting and moving, creating a fragile balance between human use and geomorphic processes. Frequent landslides have promoted several exotic plant species, which grow primarily on disturbed soil. The Place has a history of small and large wildland fires that result from a combination of productive vegetation and hot, dry summers just a short distance inland from the coastal marine influence. The highly erosive soils coupled with steep, unstable slopes generate significant sediment, augmented by road maintenance material and removal of ground cover by fires. The landslides and erosion result in frequent road closures and slough material removal problems and sedimentation that affects offshore marine sanctuaries.

The Los Burros gold district (which includes most of the Big Sur Place southeast of Prewitt Creek) was historically the principle source of gold mining, both lode and placer, in the Coast Ranges. Two small active gold mines remain. There are limestone mining claims on the slopes of Pico Blanco, both on private and national forest lands. These claims have not been mined to date. Jade has been collected historically in the areas of Plaskett Creek/Jade Cove and Willow Creek, as well as by divers offshore.

The entire area is now withdrawn from mineral entry, which precludes any new mining claims. Claims with prior existing rights may still operate, subject to environmental restrictions.

Human inhabitance of Big Sur dates back thousands of years. The Esselen Tribe of American Indians traditionally lived in the central portion, while the Salinan tribe inhabited the southern portion of the Place. Coastal travel along the De Anza Trail has been documented from the mission period through World War II. Homesteads were the first developments along the coast. There is also a strong Civilian Conservation Corps influence on historic bridges and other historic facilities to be found throughout Big Sur. Heritage resources management emphasizes (and will continue to emphasize) preservation and interpretation.

The beauty of Big Sur and its locations between major northern and southern population centers makes it a place to be protected from development and overuse.

Existing Wilderness:

- Silver Peak Wilderness 30,311 acres
- Ventana Wilderness 22,843 acres

Existing Special Interest Areas:

- Alder Creek 17 acres
- Lion Den Spring 81 acres
- Southern Redwood 17 acres

Existing Research Natural Area:

- Cone Peak Gradient 2,734 acres

Total national forest acres--Big Sur Place: 82,718

Desired Condition: The Big Sur Place is maintained for its internationally valued scenic beauty and biodiversity. It is a naturally evolving and natural appearing landscape that functions as an international destination defined by spectacular land-ocean interface scenery. Visitor use is accommodated without compromising resource values. The valued attributes to be preserved over time are stands of redwoods within a mosaic of other vegetation, riparian vegetation appearing as prominent ribbons, grasslands that appear as openings across flat plateaus along the coast, and a rustic/rural built environment that reflects the eclectic character of the land and people.

Program Emphasis: Management will be particularly sensitive to the fragility of the unstable landscape and the co-mingling of terrestrial and marine ecosystems. Continue emphasis on visitor education relative to the unique assemblage of recreation opportunities and resources. Increase efforts to control the introduction or spread of invasive noxious plants and predatory

exotic wildlife species to aide in the recovery of threatened and endangered species. Vegetative management emphasis includes fuels management around populated areas and within adjoining wildernesses. Forest health issues such as the spread of Sudden Oak Death, which holds the potential to cause devastation of coastal-forested habitats are addressed. The North Coast Ridge Road will remain closed to public vehicular and mountain bike use, but open to foot and horse equestrian traffic.

Analyze the potential for visitor information opportunities on the south coast. Provide continuing opportunities for day-use and camping, including the maintenance, upgrading or construction of visitor facilities along California State Highway 1. Communication and administrative site support facilities will be developed to improve management of the Place. Adaptive reuse of existing structures will remain the preferred way of addressing future facility needs. Manage recreation use and related facilities to maintain scenic integrity. Protect and enhance scenic qualities through cooperative efforts with CalTrans, California State Parks, and others.

Project management decisions will be consistent with the enforceable policies of the California Coastal Act and the Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan to the maximum extent practicable.

The Brazil Ranch will be a place for conference and educational opportunities focused on environmental conservation, stewardship and sustainability. Managed public access and recreation opportunities will be provided. Traditional land uses and resource conservation activities can be showcased and studied. Other small-scale special-uses may be authorized.

Brazil Ranch

Black Mountain

Theme: A rural scenic landscape of chaparral with blue oak woodlands and savannas. Home of wild horses and sensitive plant species.

Setting: The Black Mountain Place is the most distinctive landform in this northeastern arm of the Los Padres National Forest. The highly visible, silver-domed Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) radar facility at its summit further emphasizes the mountain as the central topographic feature in this expansive, relatively undisturbed landscape. The national forest boundary defines three sides of this Place. Descending north, east and west from the mountain to the edge of the national forest, the terrain becomes rolling foothills and flatlands that spread onto large neighboring ranches. Streams such as Fernandez and Shell Creeks are intermittent, but there are springs and seeps scattered throughout the area.

Chaparral covers the entire mountain and most of the Place, but below elevations of 1,800 feet large patches of blue oak woodlands and savannas intermix with chaparral. It is home to a wild horse herd that roams this area and to two sensitive plant species.

Castle Crag, Black Mountain Place

Access to this Place is limited by the absence of public roads. The main road to the FAA facility is paved. Portions of the area receive considerable public use for such activities as recreational mining, hunting, mountain biking, and OHV use. There are two allotments and two special-use

pastures. The Black Mountain Place also supports a number of special-uses including power lines, apiaries, and several popular filming locations.

There are no special designations.

Total national forest acres--Black Mountain Place: 17,083

Desired Condition: This is a natural appearing landscape that functions as open space. The valued landscape attributes to be preserved over time are the area's natural vegetation pattern and sustainability of intermixed chaparral and oak grasslands.

Program Emphasis: Manage livestock and wild horse grazing as per allotment and Black Mountain Wildhorse Management Plan.

Colson

Theme: A traditional, rustic, back-roaded area utilized for hunting, remote touring and camping. An intermix of recreation and grazing activities, and threatened and endangered species habitat identify this Place.

Setting: The Colson Place is a steep mountainous area less than an hour's drive from Santa Maria. This Place is situated east of Tepusquet Canyon, south of California State Highway 166, and north of the Sisquoc River. Local ranches border the Colson Place on the west, north, and south, with the San Rafael Wilderness on the eastern border. The landscape character is natural appearing with little development.

The South and North Fork La Brea Creeks drain through the Colson Place and are the primary watersheds in the area. The Colson Quarry extracts flagstone for commercial sale from private land. Vegetation is primarily mixed chaparral with oak woodlands with riparian vegetation in the canyon bottoms. The riparian areas consist of diverse populations of deciduous and evergreen plant species. The area is highly susceptible to lightning and human-caused fires. Tepusquet Canyon has numerous homes and ranches that are threatened by wildland fire due to access problems and fuel accumulations.

Wildlife is diverse in this Place. The threatened California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*) and the endangered southern steelhead are found in and adjacent to the riparian zones in some areas. Livestock grazing and recreation use can disturb frog populations. Currently, the South Fork La Brea Creek can have seasonal closures for livestock grazing and vehicle travel as determined by monitoring. Access to the Colson Place is via Sierra Madre or Colson Canyon Roads. Most of the area is used for dispersed recreation activities including hunting, equestrian use, hiking, and camping. There are six semi-primitive campgrounds in the area. Colson Campground has been subject to vandalism and is the site of large parties, requiring additional Forest Service presence to control inappropriate activities. Most recreationists visiting the Colson Place are repeat visitors from the Central Coast desiring a rustic outdoor experience away from urban centers. Historic use of the Place is

connected mainly to Native Americans, who used the area as a trade route between the coast and interior valleys.

Development of private land adjacent to the national forest boundaries is occurring; private lands intermingle with public lands throughout the Place. These are mostly family ranches that are managed for livestock production. There are four allotments and two livestock-area special-use permits within the Place. All but one of the allotments extends into adjacent Places.

There is a communication site on Tepusquet Peak that houses a transmitter for a television station in Santa Maria, as well as other communication facilities.

There are no special designations in this Place.

Total national forest acres--Colson Place: 43,345

Desired Condition: The Colson Place is a natural appearing and pastoral landscape that functions as a traditional back-road area for recreation and livestock grazing. Riparian vegetation, the oak-grasslands along the canyon bottoms (with a mix of chaparral vegetation on the slopes) are sustainable. The facilities maintain the dispersed rural character that recalls the family histories that make this Place.

Program Emphasis: Implement forest health projects to reduce fuel accumulations and threats to adjacent homes and ranches. Continue multiple-use management while minimizing conflicts between threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species, recreation, and livestock grazing activities. Provide additional Forest Service presence in the area. Explore opportunities for a managed recreational target shooting area. Improve developed campground facilities and access to historic trails.

Cuesta

Theme: A scenic backdrop to urban areas that separates inland and coastal zones. It is one of the 'Key Places' representing the most picturesque national forest locations, containing its own landscape character. Steep canyons shelter important riparian habitats. Day-use trails, wilderness and recreation provide direct linkages to urban areas. Cuesta Ridge Botanical Area offers opportunities for interpretation of serpentine plant communities and the Sargent cypress (*Cupressus sargentii*). Communication sites along the ridgeline are an increasingly important activity in this Place.

Setting: Cuesta Place is situated in the narrow, northwest trending Santa Lucia Mountains. The Santa Lucia Mountain Range (locally referred to as 'East and West Cuesta') creates a dramatic backdrop to coastal communities, such as San Luis Obispo and Arroyo Grande. California State Highway 101 climbs through Cuesta Grade and links the coast to inland communities like Santa Margarita, Paso Robles and Atascadero. The ridge top offers panoramas of the ocean and coastal communities, as well as the expansive inland ranchlands and towns. There are several Special Area Designations in the Place including the Santa Lucia Wilderness in which there is opportunity for hiking along year-round streams. The Black Butte Research Natural Area provides opportunities for research on knobcone pine (*Pinus attenuata*)-chaparral and Sargent cypress plant communities, while the Cuesta Ridge SIA supports stands of Sargent cypress, Coulter pine, and 12 percent of the national forest's Region 5 sensitive plant species.

Watersheds in the Place are important components of the functioning of ecosystems. They support the Morro Bay National Estuary, Lopez Lake (a domestic water supply), and provide habitat for south central steelhead.

Dense riparian vegetation in this Place supports abundant wildlife. The Cuesta Ridge Botanical Area offers an opportunity for viewing and interpreting serpentine plant communities such as Sargent cypress forests. Numerous rare plant species are associated with this unusual parent material.

The presence of nearby communities increases concern for wildland fire, including management of the Place as a Wildland/Urban Interface. The area has experienced several large fires in the past that have threatened nearby communities and resulted in losses of homes. The landscape consists of steep mountains and low hills with rounded ridges that have narrow, deep canyons. The ridge tops and steep slopes are dominated by mixed chaparral and are surrounded by private open grasslands.

Wildlife is diverse in this Place and includes condors, peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*), steelhead trout in some streams, and a dense spotted owl population in Lopez Canyon. Huffs Hole is both a condor and peregrine falcon breeding area. California State Highway 101 creates a major barrier to wildlife and plant dispersal between East and West Cuesta Ridges.

The proximity of the mountains to urban areas makes this area particularly attractive for day-use activities like mountain biking, pleasure driving and hiking. Recreation use is consistently high. Cerro Alto is a popular Developed Recreation Site and is operated by a concessionaire. Dispersed Recreation opportunities are numerous. Another popular attraction is the High Mountain Lookout, which is also a peregrine falcon recovery and California condor interpretive site.

There are a number of locations within this Place where access problems exist, or where roads are in poor shape and create a safety hazard. Private land blocks access to the Garcia Wilderness and Trout Creek. Numerous old mining roads and trails on West Cuesta Ridge form an extensive undesignated trail system. Unauthorized OHV use occurs on West Cuesta. Also, because there are numerous private in-holdings within the national forest boundary, especially between Bald Mountain and the Santa Lucia Wilderness, there are conflicts between private landowners and mountain bikers and hikers.

The mountains and the California State Highway 101 corridor make this Place a vital location for a variety of special-uses including communication sites, power lines, a railroad line, a water tunnel, high pressure oil and gas lines, and a fiber-optic line. There are also nine livestock grazing allotments in this Place. In addition, there are numerous old abandoned mines.

Existing Wilderness:

- Santa Lucia Wilderness 18,403 acres

Existing Special Interest Areas:

- Cuesta Ridge 1,304 acre

Existing Research Natural Area:

- Black Butte 940 acres

All acreages shown are within the Place.

Total national forest acres--Cuesta Place: 42,187 acres

Desired Condition: Cuesta Place is a natural appearing landscape that functions as the scenic backdrop and portal to the coast. The landscape attributes to be preserved over time are: the mosaic patterns of vegetation, the natural skyline silhouette, healthy watersheds, and non-motorized trail systems. Motorized use is limited to the existing road system. Regional habitat linkages are intact and functioning.

Program Emphasis: Implement forest health projects to reduce fuel accumulations and threats to nearby communities and decrease sediments to streams. Designate a trail system for mountain bikes, equestrians, and hikers. Prevent unauthorized OHV use and recreational target shooting. Seek opportunities to increase interpretation of the designated botanical area and geologic resources. Work cooperatively with private landowners and San Luis Obispo County to provide access to the national forest. Continue cooperative efforts for wildlife observations and studies at the High Mountain Lookout and surrounding watersheds. Pursue a strategy of land adjustment to facilitate creation of a wildlife corridor under California State Highway 101 and maintain the habitat linkage between East and West Cuesta Ridges.

Cuyama-Highway 166 Front

Theme: A natural appearing scenic backdrop with an agricultural setting as viewed from California State Highway 166 with emerging private land development. This Place (including the Cuyama River and California State Highway 166) is a human and wildlife corridor connecting coastal to inland valley communities.

Setting: The Cuyama-Highway166 Front Place is located along the southwest edge of Cuyama Valley with expansive vistas along the California State Highway 166 corridor between Santa Maria and the Cuyama Valley. California State Highway 166 is a main transportation corridor between coastal communities, Interstate 5, and the Bakersfield area. The Cuyama Front portion of the Place consists of a comparatively steep, mountain escarpment that stands in striking contrast to the flat, rural Cuyama Valley floor. Valley-facing slopes are steep and periodically interrupted by narrow, highly eroded canyons and draws. Family ranches are located within and adjacent to the Place, much of which was a historic Spanish Land Grant. Except for a few roads and trails, public access is limited. In addition, there are scattered potreros on the eastern section of Sierra Madre Ridge that have significant cultural resource values.

Watersheds of the Place are the source of water for people living in the Santa Maria Valley. The Cuyama Watershed drains into the Twitchell Reservoir that supplies water to the Santa Maria River Basin and to agriculture in the Santa Maria Valley. Twin Rocks, Miranda Pine Mountain, Timber Peak, McPherson Peak, and Santa Barbara Canyon are the prominent topographic features of the Place.

Plant communities in this Place are diverse and range from ridge top forests to areas of dense mixed chaparral, oak woodlands, and open annual grasslands. Five rare plant species are present

Looking toward Sierra Madre, Cuyama Highway 166 Front Place.

and this Place includes the northern most extension of the redshank (*Adenostoma sparsifolium*) community. The potreros offer an unusual array of herbaceous species that are closely aligned to the Caliente Mountain flora. In the past, there have been frequent lightning and human-caused wildland fires, as well as vegetative treatment activities involving prescribed fire.

This Place serves as a wildlife corridor to the Caliente Mountains. California condors have been released from here. There are threatened California red-legged frogs in the Cuyama River and there is southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax trailli extimus*) habitat. This Place serves as a wildlife corridor to the Caliente Mountains. California condors have been released from here.

Recreation use in this area is relatively low because access is limited and is 'off-the-beaten-path.' The land ownership pattern is a mix of private and publicly owned parcels. Private parcels adjacent to the national forest preclude access to much of this Place. Public access points are critical. Recreational target shooting opportunities are in high demand.

Twin Rocks, Cuyama Highway 166 Front Place

One of the most important features of this Place is its sense of remoteness and the opportunities it provides for the exploration of open space in nearby forests. Some hunting and oil exploration occurs here, but the landscape is most prized for its dispersed recreation opportunities and scenic qualities. Some of the more popular activities in this Place include hiking, hunting, mountain biking, horseback riding, California condor viewing, hang-gliding, and paragliding.

All or parts of 10 grazing allotments are present in this Place. In several allotments, there are conflicts with riparian habitat, threatened species and heritage resources.

The Place hosts a number of important special-uses. A 30-inch oil pipeline, a power line, producing oil leases, and communication sites are located at Olive Canyon, McPherson Peak and Plowshare Peak. Several administrative sites are outside the national forest boundary.

Existing Special Interest Area:

- Sierra Madre 3,852 acres

All acreages shown are within the Place.

Total national forest acres--Cuyama-Highway 166 Front Place: 122,440

Desired Condition: Cuyama–Highway 166 Front Place is a natural appearing landscape that functions as a rural backdrop to agricultural land and small communities. The valued landscape attributes to be preserved over time are the undeveloped quality and character of the backdrop, the natural skyline silhouette, the intrinsic scenic and pastoral qualities that make the route a scenic highway, the openings created by potreros, and the contrast of the oak woodlands. Dispersed recreation opportunities are maintained. Recreational target shooting is controlled.

Program Emphasis: Focus management on heritage values in the special interest area, maintenance of scenic values, development of public access, non-motorized recreation opportunities, and livestock grazing management. Consider construction of new roads for oil and gas exploration/development in the high oil and gas potential area if necessary and consistent with leasing stipulations. Maintain the closure to public motorized use on the Sierra-Madre road.

Figueroa - Santa Ynez

Theme: Figueroa-Santa Ynez Place includes highly scenic and easily accessible developed recreation areas that feature mountain views, diverse vegetation, wildflowers and river access. Figueroa-Santa Ynez Place includes portions of the Santa Ynez watershed, which provides an important water source for rapidly growing coastal populations, important habitat for several threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species, and numerous cultural sites.

Setting: Figueroa-Santa Ynez Place is located between the Santa Ynez River and the San Rafael Mountains, which run northwest to the Sisquoc River. Elevations range from approximately 1,000 feet to 6,182 feet at McKinley Mountain with a corresponding vegetation change that includes grasslands, chaparral, and oak woodlands at lower and mid-elevations and mixed conifer forests at higher elevations. As viewed from the Santa Ynez Valley, there is a striking transition from valley vineyards and horse ranches to forested peaks, with mosaics of grass, brush, and rock outcrops in the intermediate elevations. Views from Figueroa Mountain encompass the entire Santa Ynez Valley, Lake Cachuma, and on clear days, the Pacific Ocean.

This Place is easily accessible from coastal and valley communities via California State Highway 154. In the northwest portion of the Place, Figueroa Mountain dominates the landscape. Figueroa Mountain Loop is an exceptional scenic route, providing pleasure driving through mountainous and rolling foothill landscapes. Visitors can experience distinct seasonal changes, with periodic display of wildflowers in spring, snowplay in winter, and day-use and campground facilities open most of the year. The Figueroa area also provides access to the San Rafael Wilderness.

In the southern portion of the Place, the Santa Ynez River is the dominant feature. Gibraltar and Cachuma Reservoirs date back to large water projects in the 1920s and 1950s and were developed for flood control and community water supplies. The seasonally flowing Santa Ynez River is the major source of water for both Santa Ynez Valley and coastal communities. The frequency of large flood events is estimated to occur every 16 years and lesser flood events every seven years.

Santa Ynez River and its many tributaries and

basins provide key riparian habitat, particularly for some threatened and endangered species. Neotropical migrant bird species include the endangered least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher. The least Bell's vireo's nesting habitat is critical to species recovery. The assemblage of reptiles and amphibians associated with the habitat include the endangered arroyo toad and threatened California red-legged frog. Exotic aquatic species (especially bullfrogs and crayfish) compete with native species using river habitats.

Forest visitors at Santa Ynez River

The hot, dry inland summer weather and limited availability of running streams makes the Santa Ynez River a popular destination for water-oriented activities. Dramatic rock formations distinguish the Santa Ynez Canyon (one of the longest drivable stretches of accessible water in southern California). The Lower Santa Ynez Recreation Area (LSYRA) and a large recreation residence area are situated upstream from Lake Cachuma. LSYRA day-use sites and campgrounds are concession-managed facilities that often reach maximum capacities on summer weekends. Multiple-use trails offer motorized and non-motorized use, including OHV riding, hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian use. The area includes a Forest Service administrative compound and employee housing facilities. Upper Santa Ynez Recreation Area offers a more primitive recreation experience, centered on picnicking, camping, fishing, and hunting. Seasonal road and campground closures are used in the area to protect threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species.

Recreation use is concentrated and increasing in the Figueroa-Santa Ynez Place and use trends reflect a shift to larger group sizes in developed recreation sites. Many developed sites, roads and trails need maintenance and updating. Competing recreation uses on trails create conflicts and OHV trespass is a problem. Recreational target shooting occurs in designated and undesignated locations and requires periodic trash cleanup. Law enforcement coverage is not adequate for present and future needs. Public safety is a primary concern.

The Figueroa-Santa Ynez Place has numerous examples of rock art and other archaeological sites, and Native Americans continue to use the area for plant gathering and conducting ceremonies. The area along the Santa Ynez River was an extensive prehistoric settlement that supported a large Chumash population.

Other activities occurring within this Place include active range allotments, mining claims, communications facilities, utility corridors, and commercial and non-commercial filming and photography. Private land inholdings scattered throughout the area prevent access to some national forest lands and generate occasional land exchange proposals.

Because of the vegetative cover, seasonal weather conditions, and heavy recreation use, the Figueroa-Santa Ynez Place is particularly susceptible to fire. The upper Santa Ynez Watershed has a history of large wildland brush fires that can contribute to the fire-flood sequence and may threaten nearby communities.

Noxious weeds are spread by both natural events and human caused activities. Species of most concern include star-thistle, several brooms, and tamarisk.

Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- Sisquoc River 1.9 miles

Special Interest Area:

- Mono Basin 3,698 acres

Total national forest acres--Figueroa-Santa Ynez Place: 84,998

Desired Condition: Scenic qualities of the landscape and biological diversity are maintained. Large-scale wildland fires and flood event damage are minimized. Threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species habitat and populations are sustained or increased, and exotic aquatic species and noxious weeds are controlled or reduced. Cultural resources are protected and Native American tribal relationships strengthened. All administrative and recreation facilities meet standards and provide high quality recreation experiences and public services. Special-use authorizations (including recreation residences) are all administered to standard.

Program Emphasis: Conduct prescribed fire and fuel treatment projects to maintain diverse vegetation, improve watershed conditions, and minimize large-scale wildland fire. Monitor threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species habitat and populations and control/remove exotic and noxious species. Consult with Native American tribes and continue to protect cultural resources. Upgrade administrative and recreation facilities and promote uses compatible with threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species and habitat. Work with concessionaires to provide high-quality visitor services and information. Complete recreation residence continuation determination and complete actions needed when term permits expire on December 31, 2008. Complete any scheduled residence removals. Continue to promote volunteer Resource Improvement Projects with cooperators. Limit recreational target shooting to managed sites. Control unauthorized OHV use. Work collaboratively with federal and state agencies and water management entities as they initiate efforts to restore steelhead trout access to habitat upstream of Bradbury Dam. Work cooperatively with the City of Santa Barbara to enable a consistent approach to resource management within the Mono SIA.

Highway 33 Corridor

Theme: This scenic, cross-forest byway corridor provides the primary recreation access through the main body of the national forest and provides recreation opportunities in the Place. It is one of the 'Key Places' representing the most picturesque national forest locations, containing its own landscape character. The travel corridor features numerous panoramic vistas, notable rock formations, the scenic Matilija and Sespe Creek Watersheds, the Cuyama River Valley, and diverse vegetation that provides relatively undisturbed habitats for several southern California native species. This Place includes a historic, late 19th century travel route that has become important for auto-touring, numerous recreation activities and a base for environmental education and interpretation.

Setting: Highway 33 Corridor Place crosses the Transverse Ranges and connects coastal cities like Ventura and Ojai to the inland Cuyama Valley. Designated as a Forest Service Scenic Byway, and also known as the Jacinto Reyes Scenic Byway, the route was pioneered by the Reyes family to access their ranch on the Cuyama side of the mountains. Entry points along the corridor from California State Highway 33 serve as portals to four different areas of wilderness that border the corridor: the Matilija, Sespe, Dick Smith, and the Chumash Wildernesses. The scenic byway is heavily traveled and is well known for its many recreation opportunities, its cultural history, and superb scenery where the upper reaches of Sespe Creek and the Sespe Gorge offer views of dramatic geologic formations.

From Ojai, the highway parallels the Ventura River and climbs up through the Matilija Creek Watershed, which flows to the south, crosses into the Sespe Watershed that flows to the east, and eventually drops into the Cuyama Watershed, which flows to the west. The route passes through steep, often unstable, mountainous terrain. Falling rocks and roadside erosion are common and disposal of slide material (to keep the highway open) is a constant challenge.

Jacinto Reyes Scenic Byway

An array of plant communities greets the traveler. On the coastal side, hardwoods line riparian areas along Matilija Creek at the lower elevations. At higher elevations, there are scattered populations of bigcone Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga macrocarpa*) and canyon live oak forests. At the highest elevations of

Pine Mountain, undisturbed mixed conifer forests cover upper north slopes. In the eastern rain shadow where the highway descends into the Cuyama Valley, the vegetation changes to desert scrub and singleleaf pinyon forests and woodlands.

The Cuyama Valley (lying in the rain shadow of the Coast Range) has a climate which is much drier, and woodlands and grasslands are the dominant vegetation. Large parcels of private land are interspersed with the public land. Farming, grazing, and oil exploration exists on both private and public land.

The Sespe Creek Watershed is large and wild and supports a high degree of biodiversity. The arroyo toad, California condor, desert bighorn sheep, and southern steelhead trout are some of California's endangered wildlife which inhabit this remote watershed. The Dry Lakes Ridge Botanical Area preserves remnant stands of ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) and several relict plant species. Invasive, noxious weeds, notably tamarisk, Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum*), and yellow star-thistle (*Centaurea solstiitalis*) occupy the area with continuing emphasis on control or limiting further spread.

The vegetation of the corridor and surrounding areas periodically experience numerous large, landscape-changing wildland fires that sometimes exceed 100,000 acres. Community protection from wildland fire is important to the area around Ojai and the many small blocks of private land that make up approximately 10 percent of the land base within the corridor. Community defense zones are yet to be fully established. The scenic highway and national forest roads provide good access to some areas. In contrast, access to other areas is restricted by private land, insufficient easements, and long travel times on steep, winding roads; these factors contribute to poor coverage for fire suppression and emergency medical services. Seasonal road closures and access by permit reduce damage to national forest resources.

The growth of communities in southern California emphasizes the need to provide access for a variety of recreation and special-use activities. The Wheeler Gorge Visitor Center on Scenic Highway 33 provides a regional base for providing visitor information and education on national forest recreation and environmental issues. Recreation opportunities within the Highway 33 Corridor Place range from scenic touring by automobile to hang-glider soaring. Photography, snowplay, camping, hiking, swimming, bicycling, OHV use, and recreational target shooting are also some of the many common uses. Sixty-eight miles of maintained OHV routes in the Ballinger Canyon area in the Cuyama Valley provide high quality off-road opportunities.

Management challenges for this Place include increasing demand for sensitive resources, quality of recreation experience, deferred maintenance of recreation facilities, maintenance of water quality and wildlife habitat, disposal of landslide and slough material on California State Highway 33 and law enforcement to deal with vandalism, graffiti, and marijuana cultivation.

A variety of special-uses occur in the Highway 33 Corridor Place. Water extractions, and grazing are examples. A gas pipeline crosses the mountains from Maricopa to Ventura. Portions of grazing allotments cover the northern half of this Place. California State Highway 33 is also a heavily used thoroughfare for transport of commerce.

Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- Sespe Creek 4.7 miles

Recommended Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- Sespe Creek 11.5 miles

Special Interest Area:

- Dry Lakes Ridge 406 acres

All acreages shown are within the Place.

Total national forest acres--Highway 33 Corridor Place: 109,150

Desired Condition: Highway 33 Corridor Place is a primary location for a large segment of recreation in the main body of the national forest, and the corridor will continue to serve as a high quality scenic byway that also provides numerous access routes for dispersed recreation to more remote areas of the national forest. The Wheeler Gorge Visitor Center is the southern-most provider of the national forest's environmental education and interpretation for forest resources and environmental issues. The Wheeler Gorge Visitor Center is also a significant feature of this Place because of the quick, easy access from southern California communities. Partnerships (both public and private) are a significant component of accomplishing work and solving problems. The scenic byway is maintained for its history and the natural appearing landscape. Future recreation and special-uses attempt to grow with the demands of increasing populations, but remain in compliance with wildlife and other natural resource constraints.

Program Emphasis: The Highway 33 Corridor Place will continue to provide quality recreation opportunities. Continued emphasis on reducing conflicts between recreationists and sensitive species, and to minimize illegal activities (e.g., marijuana cultivation) will be maintained. Continue to eradicate or limit further spread of invasive weeds. Vegetation management emphasis also includes the creation of community defense zones around urbanized areas while addressing forest health and wilderness values. Focus on reducing risks from wildland fire to maintain water and scenic quality and improve steelhead and arroyo toad habitat. Continue plans to remove existing recreation facilities, which are resulting in adverse impacts to endangered species and pursue funding to construct replacement recreation facilities with equal or greater user capacities. Continue cooperative efforts with CDFG and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries to provide fishing opportunities at the Rose Valley Lakes. Establish community defense zones in the urban interface. Emphasize the acquisition of lands to improve public access, to promote ecological stability, and to reduce or eliminate use conflicts. Pursue development of an OHV trail linking the Ballinger Canyon area to Hungry Valley. Relocate recreational target shooting from the environmentally sensitive Cherry Canyon to a better location in the Rose Valley area. If oil or gas developments occur in the Cuyama Valley, they will proceed only as specified by the Oil and Gas EIS. Consider construction of new roads, if necessary and consistent with leasing stipulations, for oil and gas exploration/development in the high oil and gas potential area. Permits for exploration, development, and operation of additional oil and gas facilities will be subject to further environmental study and be designed and maintained to reduce or eliminate environmental impacts. Work with Caltrans to designate and approve Road Spoil Disposal Sites along California State Highway 33. Work collaboratively with federal and state agencies and water management entities to restore steelhead trout to habitat upstream of Matilija Dam.

Hungry Valley - Mutau

Theme: A variety of recreation opportunities are provided in natural appearing landscapes of grassland, chaparral, meadows, and pine forests. Pine forests and tranquil meadows invite visitors to remote wilderness hiking.

Setting: The Hungry Valley/Mutau Place rises from the Piru drainage at about 2,500 feet to Frazier Mountain at 8,013 feet. The lower elevation edge is delineated by Pyramid Lake and the higher elevation boundary is marked by a series of high peaks and ridges. This area is the headwaters for Piru Creek. The area offers views of a scenic montane landscape to both the local mountain communities and to Interstate 5 travelers. Some of the oldest igneous and metamorphic rocks in the Transverse Ranges underlie the Piru Creek Watershed. This area is most accessible from Interstate 5 and it serves as the primary access to the northern portion of the Sespe Wilderness and the eastern boundary of this Place.

The dominant plant community at lower elevations is mixed chaparral. Mixed conifer forests, Jeffrey pine (Pinus jeffreyi) forests and singleleaf pinyon pine (Pinus monophylla) woodlands are prevalent at higher elevations. Canyon live oak (Quercus chrysolepis) forms dense forests along shaded slopes and in canyon bottoms. Noxious weed infestations are present, including tamarisk (Tamarix ramossisma). All but the larger streams are dry through the summer; however, Piru Creek has water year-around. Water flowing from Piru Creek feeds Pyramid Lake, a year-round, water-based recreation area that serves as an important source of water for the Ventura County region.

The area has experienced a few large wildland fires in the last 25 years, but most of the area has a build-up of hazardous fuels. Much of the Jeffrey pine forest is in Condition Class 3 except for managed stands on Frazier Mountain and within burned areas. Other areas near the Interstate 5 transportation corridor have experienced more frequent fires than historically normal. In the past, fuel treatments have been limited in extent. At present, fire-safe conditions along the urban interface are inconsistent and private landowners look to the Forest Service to create community defense zones.

Spotted owls (Strix occidentalis occidentalis) occupy the area and a wild trout fishery on Lockwood and Piru Creeks provides fly-fishing opportunities. An important wildlife habitat linkage connects the southern Los Padres ranges to the Castaic ranges to the east.

Native American rock art and campsites, historic mining districts, and early Forest Service Administrative sites (including fire lookouts) and town sites reflect the history of human use in the area. Human influence today is in the form of developed and dispersed recreation facilities and trails.

This Place is a major year-round recreation area for both local residents and regional visitors. It is a popular destination for OHV and day-use visitors seeking waterplay. The dramatic contrasts in scenery and vegetation provide an excellent viewshed for touring. Although the area is readily accessible from Interstate 5, it still offers visitors opportunities to experience a sense of distance and isolation. Recreation focuses mainly on remote camping and day-use facilities although some developed facilities support OHV activities and camping. Campground facilities, roads, and non-motorized trails are in poor condition due to lack of funding to address deferred facility maintenance backlog.

Populations are growing along the I-5 corridor and in mountain communities. Development of private property is adding to an increase in the population of urban areas near or within the national forest boundaries. Access to the national forest is restricted by a lack of easements and rights-of-way. Illegal activities including littering (including shooting debris), illegal OHV use, graffiti, firearms violations, unauthorized fires, unauthorized group events, and closure violations present additional management challenges. Law enforcement coverage is inadequate.

A wide variety of multiple and special-uses take place within the Place ranging from electronic sites to recreation residence tracts. Recreation uses and authorizations for water extraction constitute the majority of the special-uses. The national forest also provides a variety of small forest products that are of interest to the general public, such as pinecones, fuelwood, traditional plants and Christmas trees.

Recommended Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- Piru Creek 32.8 miles

Special Interest Area:

- Foster Bear Ponds 197 acres.

Total national forest acres--Hungry Valley/Mutau Place: 77,701

Desired Condition: The Hungry Valley/Mutau Place is maintained as a natural appearing landscape that functions as an OHV recreation area and a tranquil Back Country area. The valued landscape attributes to be preserved over time are the meadows/grasslands and pine tree over-story (especially in the Mutau area), and the natural appearance of the backdrop to communities. Regional habitat linkages are intact and functioning.

Program Emphasis: Management will strive to increase the recreation opportunities and yet maintain the primitive feel afforded by this Place, as adjacent areas become more populated. Increase management presence to curb vandalism and other inappropriate uses. Treat vegetation for forest health and to reduce fuel loading. Manage vegetation to maintain healthy stands of mature conifers, which may include new road construction. Enhance recreation infrastructure to

meet growing demand, including evaluating the need for added OHV connecter trails, upgrading the Goldhill Road from I-5 to Alamo Mountain, expanding or creating campgrounds, trailheads, and other recreation facilities, and developing a parallel OHV trail from Hungry Valley to Goldhill to reduce safety problems. The existing closure of the Goldhill Road Corridor and Hardluck Road Corridor to camping outside of developed campsites should be maintained to protect resource values and reduce user conflicts. Evaluate the appropriateness of facilities (including Hardluck Campground) and human uses within the Critical Biological Area and implement changes as needed. Pursue development of an OHV trail that would link the Ballinger Canyon area to Hungry Valley. Manage the upper Piru Creek Corridor to preserve wild and scenic river qualities and sensitive riparian habitats. Existing OHV trails and crossings within the Scenic River Corridor may continue, but new OHV routes will not be developed within the River Corridor. Seek mineral withdrawal of all lands within the Wild and Scenic River Corridor as a part of Wild and Scenic legislation. Address resource conflicts at Goldhill camping area by developing appropriate recreation infrastructure and implementing user controls. Pursue disposal of the Tejon Administrative Site via appropriate conveyance at fair market value to Hungry Valley State Vehicular Recreation Area. Activities will be managed to continue to provide the regional habitat linkage between the Los Padres National Forest and the Castaic Mountain Range.

Mt. Pinos

Theme: A big tree (old growth), high country environment offering opportunities for year-round recreation. The Mt. Pinos Place is the center of the Chumash Indian Universe.

Setting: The Mt. Pinos Place serves as the primary outdoor recreation gateway on the eastern side of the Los Padres National Forest where the Tehachapi Mountains, Transverse Ranges and the San Joaquin Valley converge. Elevations range from 4,000 feet to 8,831 feet at the peak of Mount Pinos (the national forest's highest point and center of the Chumash Indian Universe). The San Andreas Fault bisects the area in an east-west direction. Mt. Pinos Place is readily accessible from Interstate 5 and is within an hour's drive of downtown Los Angeles to the south or of Bakersfield to the north.

Singleleaf pinyon-California juniper (*Juniperus californica*) woodlands and forests dominate low elevation landscapes. Montane conifer forests (composed almost entirely of Jeffrey pine) cover the higher elevations. Small patches of limber pine (*Pinus flexilis*) and subalpine vegetation occupy the mountain summits. The area has the largest stand of unmanaged Jeffrey pine stands in southern California. Dalmatian toadflax (*Linaria dalmatica* - an invasive plant) has taken hold in the Place north of Frazier Park. Also, there are infestations of spotted knapweed (*Centaurea biebersteinii*) and Russian knapweed (*Acroptilon repens*) on private land near national forest lands.

The Place is a frequently occupied area within the California condor's distributional range. Mt. Pinos provides a critical wildlife linkage between the national forest and the adjacent Wind Wolves Preserve, the Bitter Creek Wildlife Refuge and Carrizo Plains Monument. Together these four areas comprise a large, interconnected block of wildland habitat for many species. The Place provides habitat for the California spotted owl and northern goshawk (Accipter gentilis).

Mt. Pinos. Photo by Mike Foster

The area also provides habitat for the Fort Tejon woolly sunflower (Eriophyllum lanatum hallii), one of only three known locations in the world. There is one established research natural area (RNA), the San Emigdio Mesa RNA that supports pinyon-juniper woodland, and one candidate RNA, Sawmill Mountain. Two special interest areas are also found in the Place. Mt. Pinos Summit SIA exhibits exemplary botanical values, including limber pine stands that are the national forest's sole example of southern California subalpine forest. The Quatal Canyon SIA boasts unique, eroded badland topography with Miocene vertebrate fossils.

The Place serves as a scenic backdrop to a number of rural mountain communities like Frazier Park and Pine Mountain Club. Views from the area's highest points include expansive vistas of adjacent mountains and valleys. Cerro Noroeste Road offers vistas of the Badlands and San Emigdio Mesa, two prominent geological features of the area. Mt. Pinos is a popular dark-sky star gazing location for amateur astronomers. There are significant paleontological resources in Quatal and the Dry Canyons.

The Place provides year-round motorized and non-motorized recreation. It is a regional destination for winter snowplay activities and cross-country skiing, but facilities and snowplay services are inadequate to accommodate the large volume of winter sports enthusiasts. This results in conflicts between local landowners and businesses resulting in an inferior experience for many recreationists. Challenges within the Place include landownership patterns, which preclude providing loop opportunities for pleasure driving and trails within the Place. Unmanaged recreational target shooting behind the County Fire Station has resulted in a problem area in terms of inappropriate target litter, as well as illegal dumping. User-constructed trails are increasing adjacent to local communities.

Mt. Pinos Place accommodates special-uses including communication sites. There are also several organization camps that offer facilities for a number of groups. The area contains seven occupied grazing allotments. The area's natural setting and its close proximity to Los Angeles make it a very popular 'site' location for the film industry.

Existing Wilderness:

- Chumash Wilderness 37,248 acres

Recommended Wilderness:

- Chumash - Toad Springs (Chumash Wilderness) 560 acres

Special Interest Areas:

- Chumash Toad Springs 453 acres
- Quatal Canyon 469 acres

Existing Research Natural Areas:

- San Emigdio Mesa 1,239 acres

Recommended Research Natural Areas:

- Sawmill Mountain 3,451 acres

Total national forest acres--Mt. Pinos Place: 153,454

Desired Condition: The Mt. Pinos Place is maintained as a naturally evolving and naturally appearing landscape that functions as a big tree (old growth) recreation environment. The valued landscape attributes to be preserved over time are the big tree (old growth) Jeffrey pine forested areas, the natural appearing backdrop to rural communities, and the rustic mountain-built environment. Regional habitat linkages are intact and functioning.

Program Emphasis: Managers expect to focus on perpetuating healthy conifer forests that are one of the main attractions for national forest visitors. The big tree (old growth) appearance of the Jeffrey pine forests would be maintained with vegetative treatments that reduce stand densification problems. Active management of vegetation to maintain healthy conifer stands and protect communities is emphasized, including management within the Chumash Wilderness. Management of recreation is expected to focus on: (a) improving the snowplay experience both for visitors and the community; (b) maintaining facilities and trails to standard; and (c) providing hiking, biking, equestrian, and OHV opportunities. The recreational target shooting area behind Frazier Park will be placed under active management as a concession-operated recreational target shooting area, or be closed. The existing closure to public motorized use of the road from the Chula Vista parking lot to Tumamait Trail Observation Point at the summit of Mt. Pinos will be maintained to protect cultural and botanical resources. Pursue relocation or elimination of the single-user communication site on Mt. Pinos if viable alternatives become available. The existing closure of the Frazier Mountain Park Road/Cuddy Valley Road/Mil Potrero Road/Lockwood Valley Road Corridors to camping outside of developed campsites will be maintained to protect resource values and reduce user conflicts. Pursue development of an OHV trail that would link the Ballinger Canyon area to Hungry Valley, and thereby facilitate the closure of the Toad Springs OHV trail through the Chumash Wilderness as called for in the 1992 Condor Range and River Protection Act. Activities in the Place will be managed to continue to provide the interconnected block of habitat linkages. Manage light pollution to protect stargazing opportunities.

Ojai - Piru Front Country

Theme: The Ojai-Piru Front Country Place serves as the scenic backdrop for the communities and urban areas at the foot of the national forest. The Ojai-Piru Front Country provides day-use recreation opportunities and access points for extended stays in the interior of the national forest. The bluffs, rock outcrops and steep landscapes hint at the rugged Back Country just beyond. Landscape retention, watershed protection and day-use recreation are typical themes of urban interface front-country areas. Oil and gas operations have occurred in a few locations in this Place for many years.

Setting: The Ojai-Piru Front Country Place follows San Cayetano Fault from Ojai across the front of the Topa Topa Mountains and Santa Paula Ridge to the mouth of the Sespe River and past Fillmore and Piru to the eastern national forest boundary near the Los Angeles/Ventura County line. It forms a scenic, mountainous backdrop to Lake Casitas, Lake Piru, and the Ojai and Santa Clara Valleys. Terrain varies from low rolling hills to steep, high mountains near the urban-rural interface. Several communities, extensive farmlands and historic oil fields border the Place. Oil was first discovered in California just off-forest in Santa Paula Canyon where natural oil seeps are prevalent. The Ojai-Piru Front Country provides several entry points of access to the Matilija and Sespe Wildernesses and borders the Condor Sanctuary. Early homesteads are present near Piru, and the first gold discovered in California (pre-dating the Sierran Gold Rush) was found just east of the national forest in Santa Felicia Canyon.

Numerous rivers and streams, like Sespe Creek, Piru Creek, Santa Paula Creek, and Matilija Creek flow southward from interior watersheds of the Transverse Mountain Range. Water quality is generally good. Domestic and agricultural water sources have been extensively developed along the front, including diversions, springs, wells, and tunnels that tap both surface and groundwater emanating from national forest land. Mountain peaks often exceed 4,000 feet in elevation, the highest being the Topa Topa bluffs at 6,367 feet. The ruggedness of these peaks is due to the high tectonic activity in these mountains explaining why earthquakes and landslides are not uncommon.

Ojai Valley, Ojai Piru Front Country Place.
Photo by Tom Iraci

The predominately south-facing slopes of the Ojai-Piru Front Country Place are dominated by chaparral with areas of grassland and oak woodland at lower elevations. Conifers grow in patches along the ridges and on peaks. Narrow riparian corridors contrast sharply with chaparral-covered uplands. Wildland fires historically have threatened national forest resources, private land, and communities along the extensive Wildland/Urban Interface. Wildlife species in the Ojai-Piru Front Country Place are typical of those in southern California chaparral communities. Sensitive species found within the Ojai-Piru Front Country Place most often live in riparian habitat. The national forest manages potential impacts to wildlife species from oil and gas development, grazing, concentrated recreation use, and other national forest activities. Unique wildlife species include the arroyo toad, southwestern willow flycatcher, California condor and southern California steelhead. Invasive and exotic species can cause problems for native wildlife and have spread through many of the riparian areas in this Place.

As urbanization spreads towards the national forest, human-caused fire ignitions have increased. Thus, there are more requests for fuelbreaks and community defense zones. Fire suppression is hampered by poor access to private land on both sides of the national forest boundary.

Mountain biker on Pratt Trail, Ojai Piru Front Country Place

Various dispersed recreation opportunities are available to the public including mountain biking, equestrian use, hiking, hang-gliding/ paragliding, rock climbing, camping, waterplay, fishing, and limited OHV use. Opportunities for developed and dispersed recreation are limited by public access to national forest land. Existing trails and trailheads are not meeting demands of nearby urban populations, and they are not being maintained to standard. Certain areas receive heavy day-use and there are conflicts between hunters, OHV enthusiasts, private landowners, and oil field developments. Graffiti and sanitation problems affect water quality and aesthetics in Santa Paula.

A small number of livestock grazing allotments are found within the Place. The Sespe Oil Field has produced oil and gas since the late 1800s, and other areas along the Ojai-Piru Front Country Place have moderate to high potential for exploration and development.

Competing uses include multiple demands for limited water resources, the need for access to recreation opportunities, and oil and gas developments. These lands produce surface and groundwater for adjacent agricultural areas and communities and provide many domestic and agricultural water needs along the entire front. There is limited access to the national forest from this Place. Land encroachment is a problem from adjacent private lands.

There are no special designations.

Total national forest acres--Ojai-Piru Front Country Place: 59,454

Desired Condition: The Ojai-Piru Front Country Place is expected to continue to serve as a high-quality recreation playground and scenic backdrop to nearby communities. The Ojai-Piru Front Country Place is maintained as a natural appearing landscape that functions as a scenic backdrop for urban communities and continues to provide recreation opportunities while protecting natural resources. The valued landscape attributes to be preserved over time are visibility of rock outcrops and cliffs, and the natural skyline ridge as a backdrop to urban areas. The historic Sespe Oil Field and associated opportunities continue to contribute to the national energy demand.

Program Emphasis: Management focus is expected to continue on reducing risk from wildland fire, improving trail access to national forest lands, maintaining scenic quality, improving recreation facilities, domestic water, oil and gas, and increasing public environmental education. Establish community defense zones. Continue to reduce conflicts between recreationists, private landowners, sensitive species, and minimize illegal activities (e.g., marijuana cultivation). Emphasize acquiring land to improve public trail access, to promote ecological stability, and to reduce or eliminate use conflicts. Continue to work with the United Water District to complete a land exchange that resolves land ownership problems at Lake Piru. Continue active participation in the Santa Felicia Hydroelectric Power relicensing project.

The historic Sespe Oil Field continues to contribute to the national energy supply. If new oil or gas developments occur, they will proceed only as specified by the decision pending from the Oil and Gas EIS. Permits for exploration, development, and operation of additional facilities will be subject to further environmental study and the stipulations and geographic restrictions specified. Idle oil wells and ancillary facilities will be abandoned and restored to natural conditions.

Pozo - La Panza

Theme: A vast rolling chaparral landscape including a remote motorized recreation network supporting dispersed recreation activities, grazing areas for wild horses and livestock, and private inholdings characterize this Place.

Setting: The low, dissected hills and mountains of the La Panza Range dominate the Pozo/La Panza Place. Most of the Place is readily accessible either by the historic Pozo-La Panza Road (that passes through the area from east to west), or by the Navajo Road that takes off from California State Highway 58 and runs south until it meets the Pozo-La Panza Road. The Pozo/La Panza Road provides the only motorized access to the north end of the Machesna Mountain Wilderness.

This is a largely chaparral-covered landscape with scattered blue oak woodlands, gray pines, and occasional annual grasslands. Several threatened, endangered and sensitive plant and animal species reside here including the dwarf calycadenia (*Calycadenia villosa*), Camatta Canyon amole (*Chlorogalum purpureum reductum*), Parish's checkerbloom (*Sidalcea hickmanii ssp. parishii*), Santa Margarita manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pilosula pilosula*), peregrine falcon and the California condor. Water is scarce except for several springs that are vital to both wildlife and livestock.

This area is best known for its variety of OHV opportunities that require advanced skill levels. Visitors from coastal areas, especially San Luis Obispo and Arroyo Grande, heavily use OHV routes. In addition to motorized use, the area supports recreation uses such as mining, hunting, mountain biking and the running of hounds. There are four grazing allotments and a portion of the Black Mountain Wildhorse Territory. The Place supports special-uses, such as power lines, apiaries, and filming locations. Much of the area is a historic gold mining district as evidenced by scattered abandoned mines.

The variety and intensities of use in this Place create conflicts and management challenges for recreation and permitted activities.

Special Interest Area:

- Camatta (new) 55 acres

Total national forest acres--Pozo/La Panza Place: 17,175

Desired Condition: The Pozo/La Panza Place is a natural appearing landscape that functions as an open space and motorized recreation area. Healthy watersheds are maintained by managing the OHV system.

Program Emphasis: OHV use and dispersed recreation opportunities are maintained while resolving conflicts with other important resources (i.e., TES species, heritage sites, wild horses, water quality, and grazing allotments). Improve cooperation between the Forest Service and users to cultivate allies in the desired management of the Place. Improve OHV trails and facilities emphasizing safety, signage and resource protection. Increase law enforcement presence.

Rockfront

Theme: The Rockfront Place supports mixed chaparral and oak savannas in a rural landscape. 4-wheel drive and dispersed recreation activities and livestock grazing are identified with this Place. Several private inholdings are scattered throughout.

Setting: The Rockfront Place is located approximately 30 miles east of Santa Maria and is accessible from California State Highway 166 by a single entry point at the Rockfront Ranch. Day users from Santa Maria and other coastal communities can easily reach this area. The area has intermingled private lands that limit public access, and includes a number of popular loop roads and trail systems.

The area is in the Alamo Watershed that drains into the Santa Maria River Basin through the Cuyama River. This watershed is an important water source for the Santa Maria Valley residents and for agricultural uses.

A noteworthy vegetative feature is the mosaic of blue oak woodlands and forests that break up an otherwise continuous cover of chamise and mixed chaparral. This Place contains the northern-most community of redshank in California. Fire is frequent in this Place and has reburned areas that were treated in the last several decades.

Riparian corridors along Branch and Alamo Creeks are largely intact and support diverse wildlife and plant populations. Threatened and sensitive species found in these creeks include California red-legged frogs, western pond turtles, and two-striped garter snakes. Big Rocks is a historical nesting site for the peregrine falcon.

This Place is a popular destination for OHV enthusiasts, rock climbers, and hunters. There is an extensive network of roads and trails for off-road recreation. Branch Creek Road was an important connecting route in the OHV network, but it is washed out. This road interferes with wildlife in the riparian area and creates conflicts between OHVs and private landowners. There are three semi-primitive camps located in the Place with road access. The intermingled private lands within and bordering this Place result in trespass by recreationists attempting to reach the national forest through private lands.

There are four livestock grazing allotments in whole, or in part, in this Place that incorporate federal and private land. Unauthorized grazing has been a problem in the past, especially when large wildland fires have destroyed fences and natural barriers.

There are no special designations.

Total national forest acres--Rockfront Place: 17,659

Desired Condition: The Rockfront Place is a pastoral and natural appearing landscape that functions as a motorized and dispersed recreation and livestock grazing area. The attributes to be preserved over time are the mosaic of blue oak woodlands within the cover of chamise and mixed chaparral, and riparian habitats that support threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species.

Program Emphasis: Manage OHV use, livestock grazing, and rock climbing to minimize impacts to the watershed and wildlife habitats. Resolve conflicts from trespass onto private land. Explore opportunities for a managed recreational target shooting area.

San Rafael

Theme: Including several designated wilderness areas and Back Country, this vast, rugged landscape offers a distinct contrast to the urban development along the nearby coast. Heritage resources are scattered in this area, which is also rich in biodiversity.

Setting: San Rafael Place is a prime example of rugged, scenic landscapes in southern California. The Place is part of the interior Santa Lucia Mountains and forms the transition between the coastal and interior portions of the Transverse Ranges. The landscape of steep, rugged mountains and narrow canyons reaches an elevation of 6,593 feet at San Rafael Mountain. Mountains in the western portion of the Place trend northwest while those in the eastern portion trend east to west. The San Rafael, Dick Smith and Matilija Wildernesses are all part of this expansive landscape, as is the Sisquoc Wild and Scenic River and the Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary. Livestock grazing occurs within this Place on four allotments.

Because of its size, habitat complexity, and lack of disturbance, San Rafael Place supports a high degree of biodiversity. The integrity of the component ecosystems is essentially intact. Chaparral is the dominant vegetative type, but there are intermixed forests of canyon live oak and bigcone Douglas-fir on north-facing slopes and in canyon bottoms. The highest elevations support southern California mixed conifer and Jeffrey pine forests. The Sisquoc River, Manzana Creek and Matilija Creek (with their varied riparian vegetation and habitats) run uninterrupted through this expansive terrain. The Sisquoc River and Manzana Creek are important habitat for threatened and endangered species including the arroyo toad, California red-legged frog and southern steelhead.

Sisquoc River, Congressionally designated Wild and Scenic River, San Raphael Place

The Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary and additional designated critical areas protect habitat for the endangered California condor. In some locations, noxious species including star thistle, tamarisk, and arundo are established.

The San Rafael Place contains important heritage sites, including remnants of historic settlements and numerous examples of Chumash rock art. It also includes part of the Sierra Madre Special Interest Area, dedicated to the preservation of cultural resources, and used by contemporary Native Americans for conducting ceremonies and collecting plants.

For an area of such enormous size, San Rafael Place has surprisingly few points of easy access. There is an extensive trail system offering long hikes in remote settings and several roads for mountain bikes and/or motorized uses. The trail system needs maintenance and there is mechanized intrusion at a number of wilderness entry points; mechanized transportation and motorized equipment are prohibited in wilderness. While the emphasis is on non-motorized use, OHV opportunities are available on Romero-Camuesa Road. Nonconforming improvements within the wilderness, including culverts and old roadbeds have not been reclaimed or removed.

San Raphael Wilderness backpackers

Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- Sisquoc River 32.6 miles

Existing Wilderness:

- Dick Smith Wilderness 71,350 acres
- Matilija Wilderness 29,243 acres
- San Rafael Wilderness 190,168 acres

Recommended Wilderness:

- Madulce-Buckhorn (Dick Smith Wilderness) 5,360 acres
- Matilija (Matilija Wilderness)2,700 acres
- Mono (Dick Smith Wilderness) 27,012 acres

Special Interest Areas:

- Sierra Madre 1,740 acres
- Mono Basin 5,422 acres

Recommended Research Natural Area:

- Big Pine Mountain 3,258 acres

Total national forest acres--San Rafael Place: 388,669

Desired Condition: The San Rafael Place is maintained as a naturally evolving landscape that functions primarily as wilderness with Back Country Non-Motorized and Back Country Motorized Use Restricted areas. The attributes to be preserved over time are the area's wild and undisturbed character, riparian habitats, primitive recreation opportunities, mixed conifer forests, bigcone Douglas-fir forests, threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species habitat, and heritage resources. Threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species habitat and populations are sustained or increased; exotic aquatic species and noxious weeds are controlled or reduced.

Program Emphasis: Perpetuate the wild and undisturbed character of this Place. Implement the Sisquoc Wild and Scenic River Plan. Continue protecting the Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary, sensitive riparian areas and habitat for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate and sensitive species. Maintain and improve the trail system and reduce mechanized intrusions at the wilderness entry points. Continue to promote volunteer efforts in trail maintenance and wilderness patrols. Reduce the spread of noxious weed species. Work cooperatively with the City of Santa Barbara to enable a consistent approach to resource management within the Mono SIA. Maintain the closure to public motorized use on the Sierra-Madre Road.

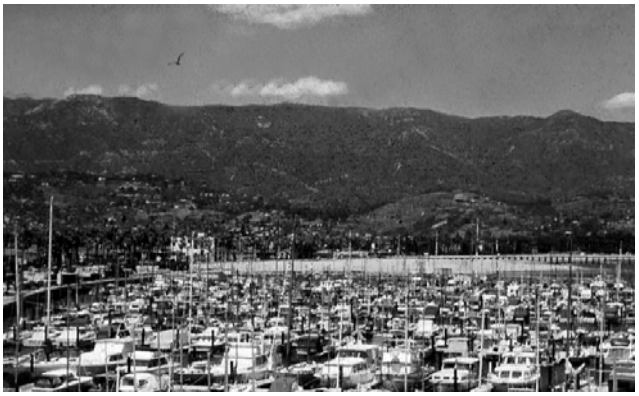
Santa Barbara Front

Theme: For coastal communities from Carpinteria to Gaviota, Santa Barbara Front Place presents a rugged, wild-appearing highly scenic backdrop. It is one of the 'Key Places' representing the most picturesque national forest locations containing its own landscape character. Rock outcrops provide contrasts of color within the deep green chaparral. From the ridgeline of the east-west trending Santa Ynez Mountains, Santa Barbara Front Place offers dramatic southern views of the ocean, Channel Islands and coastal communities. Views north of the ridgeline include Santa Ynez Valley, Lake Cachuma, mountainous wilderness and distant remote areas. Santa Barbara Front Place affords immediate access from urban areas to a natural forest environment and is an important area for viewing scenery.

Setting: Part of the western Transverse Ranges, Santa Barbara Front Place consists of steep, chaparral-covered slopes of the Santa Ynez Mountains. Within five miles of the coast, elevations rise dramatically to 4,298 feet at Santa Ynez Peak. West of California State Highway 154, the Place includes National Forest System land on both sides of the ridgeline. East of California State Highway 154, the Place includes national forest land on the south side of the Santa Ynez Mountains ridgeline. The majority of the Place is located within Santa Barbara County, and California State Highway 101 parallels the southern boundary. The scenic backdrop of the Place adds to the value of adjacent coastal and inland properties.

The Santa Barbara Front Place extends forty-six miles and includes a lengthy forest/urban interface zone. Numerous private inholdings provide a mixed land ownership pattern with large lot zoning and generate occasional proposals for land exchanges. The Place includes headwaters of multiple small streams and creeks that flow through agricultural and urban areas before reaching the ocean. Groundwater and surface water sources have been extensively developed for domestic and agricultural uses along the entire front. Three tunnels transport water from the Santa Ynez River through the mountains to coastal communities. Very little grazing and no mining occur within this place. Landslides create maintenance problems where highways and other roads cut through steep terrain.

Looking up toward Santa Barbara Front Place from Santa Barbara Harbor



The Place has a history of large and sometimes devastating wildland fire events. Sundowner winds (unique to the Santa Barbara Front Place) contribute to fast-moving and destructive wildland fires that can threaten adjoining communities. As urbanization spreads towards forested land,

the need for fuelbreaks and community defense zones increases. While portions of the Santa Ynez Mountains' ridgeline are managed as a fuelbreak, community defense zones are not fully established. Private land and the lack of easements can restrict access to some national forest boundaries during emergency response to fire, floods, and earthquakes.

The east-west orientation of the Santa Ynez Mountains combined with the distinct Mediterranean/marine climate results in a unique botanic zone and mix of species. Alternating bands of grasslands and chaparral follow bands of faulted and folded sedimentary rock formations across the landscape. Predominately south-facing slopes are dominated by chaparral with grasslands and oak woodlands at lower elevations. Conifers exist in small patches along ridgetops and on north-facing slopes. Narrow riparian corridors contrast sharply with the otherwise dry landscape. Noxious weed infestations, including scotch broom and yellow star thistle are an increasing problem, especially along road and trail corridors.

Wildlife species in the Santa Barbara Front Place are those typically found within the southern California foothill chaparral communities. Threatened and endangered species found within this Place include steelhead trout and California red-legged frog and there is potential to view the endangered California condor. Two of the most rare plants in California are found in this area—Refugio manzanita and Santa Ynez false lupine.

Important cultural and historic sites on National Forest System land and other land within the national forest boundary include the Reagan Ranch, Knapp's rock art site, La Cumbre lookout, Painted Cave, Gaviota Hot Springs, and Slippery Rock. The area has several good examples of Chumash rock art and is still utilized by Native Americans as a gathering area. The historical stagecoach route over San Marcos Pass connected Santa Barbara to the Santa Ynez Valley.

Recreation opportunities primarily focus on day-use, and include hiking, bicycling, paragliding and hang-gliding, horseback riding, rock climbing and wildlife viewing. Many roads and non-motorized trails provide 'backyard access' to the foothills and ridgetop for local hiking and biking enthusiasts from the urban areas. Auto touring routes cross and parallel the length of the Place. Divide Peak is the only designated OHV area in this Place. Recreational target shooting is only permissible at designated open shooting areas and at one permitted target range.

Multiple-uses, including intermingled land ownership patterns complicate management. Many points of access to national forest land exist, but some areas are blocked by private land. Conflicts occur between different types of recreation uses, particularly on Front Country trails, and between recreation use and resources. Law enforcement is a management challenge due to the existence of illegal activities, such as motorized vehicle trespass, trash dumping along roads and at recreational target shooting areas, vandalism of cultural sites, campfires (during fire restrictions), crimes, and graffiti.

There are no special designations.

Total national forest acres--Santa Barbara Front Place: 57,161

Desired Condition: The Santa Barbara Front Place is maintained as a natural appearing landscape that functions as a scenic backdrop for urban coastal communities. Important cultural and historic sites are preserved. Threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitat is maintained in its current condition and negative impacts to threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species are minimized. Noxious weed infestations are reduced from current levels. Special-use permits are administered to standard. Fire prevention and protection measures and watershed management efforts are established. Public access is maintained or improved. Trespass roads and trails are reduced or eliminated. Front Country trails are maintained and improved and conflicts minimized. Recreational target shooting issues are resolved. Illegal activities are reduced.

Program Emphasis: Most of the Place is managed as a Developed Area Interface zone while keeping the natural scenic backdrop for the south coast communities. Continue cooperative efforts with the Native American community, permit holders, and volunteers to preserve cultural and historic sites. Mitigate impacts to threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species when they occur. Eliminate or reduce the spread of noxious weeds during fire suppression (i.e., using washing stations), post wildland fire Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation efforts (i.e., weed monitoring and removal), volunteer weed removal projects, and project-specific activities. Implement communication site plans. Continue to reduce special-use permit backlog. Coordinate fire prevention and watershed protection programs with private land owners, national forest visitors, city and county agencies and volunteer fire departments. Complete and maintain fuelbreaks and community defense zones through these cooperative efforts. Improve public access as opportunities occur by developing, maintaining, and managing Front Country trails and OHV routes, minimize trail conflicts, and promote user education through cooperative efforts. Work with the recreational target shooting community to resolve issues. Reduce illegal actions through cooperation with city and county law enforcement agencies.

Sespe

Theme: This is the most rugged, remote repository of wilderness in the southern California ranges. It is habitat for many threatened and endangered species, as well as home to the California condor and steelhead trout. This is a place of challenge and adventure within vast expanses of untouched landscapes and unique geologic features that provide opportunities for recreation, research and education, especially along the Gene Marshall-Piedra Blanca National Recreation Trail and Wild and Scenic Sespe Creek.

Setting: The Sespe Wilderness (home of the California condor) contains some of the wildest, most rugged, and remote Back Country in southern California, yet it is still close to major urban populations. A wide variety of geologic formations are exposed in these east-west trending western mountains, leading to spectacular scenery and a great diversity of plant and animal habitats. Good accessibility via multiple entry points and an extensive trail network serve foot and equestrian travel throughout the wilderness. The nearby California Condor Sanctuary has limited public access.

High mountains include the Pine Mountain Ridge, the Topa Topa Range, and other peaks over 6,000 feet, topped by Reyes Peak at 7,510 feet. Principal streams include the Wild and Scenic Sespe Creek, Agua Blanca Creek, and portions of Piru Creek.

Watersheds are rugged, remote, and mostly undeveloped, except for trails and campsites. Most of the bedrock is of folded and faulted sedimentary origin, except for older basement rocks in the eastern area.

Bear Heaven view, Sespe Place

Mixed conifer forests cover north-facing slopes of the highest elevations and chaparral dominates the lower elevations. Wilderness designation limits opportunities for vegetation management. A minor noxious weed problem exists in some areas, including invasion of tamarisk and yellow-star thistle. Volunteer groups are working to help control tamarisk and other invasive weed populations.

There is a wide array of habitat (both riparian and upland) leading to a high biodiversity of wildlife. Cliffs and rock outcrops provide habitat for California condors, mountain lions, bighorn sheep, bats, and other species. Bear and deer are common. The anadromous southern steelhead trout can be found in a few streams during wet years, but barriers to fish passage restrict the growth of populations.

With the exception of large periodic wildland fires, the natural fire regime has largely been excluded from this Place for many decades. Old-age fuels are set up for large fires, and there is a need for management-ignited fire. Since most of the Sespe Place is surrounded by other wildland Places, there is no urban interface. Access for firefighting is limited to foot travel or aerial suppression, and there is very limited potential for motorized vehicle use during emergencies and only under special authorizations.

Recreation opportunities include wildlife viewing and interpretation, picnicking, camping, hiking, hunting and use of the hot springs. Waterplay and fishing are available at some locations, and opportunities for solitude exist throughout the wilderness (not in the Condor Sanctuary). Environmental education is insufficient to meet demand. Although there are multiple entry points to the wilderness, access to some key areas (like the Devils Gate on Sespe Creek) are unavailable to the public, and needs to be resolved. Unauthorized OHV and mountain bike activity is occurring in a few areas, and a few conflicts exist between recreationists and other resource values. Cultural sites need additional protection.

Grazing occurs on several allotments around the eastern and northern perimeter of the wilderness, but most grazing occurs outside of the boundary. Oil and gas are pumped from beneath the wilderness via directional drilling from wells in the Sespe Field located just outside the wilderness boundary. These wells were drilled before the wilderness was designated. Hot springs occur within the wilderness, and are enjoyed by recreationists for soaking. Lead bullets, antifreeze, high voltage lines and other hazards that threaten the California condors and other species are being managed or eliminated to reduce the threats to viability. A few private inholdings exist within the wilderness.

Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- Sespe Creek 24.3 miles

Existing Wilderness:

- Sespe Wilderness 218,507 acres

Recommended Research Natural Area:

- White Mountain 2,104 acres

Total national forest acres--Sespe Place: 218,657

Sespe River, a Congressionally designated Wild and Scenic River

Desired Condition: The Sespe Place continues to provide primitive recreation opportunities and is maintained as a naturally evolving landscape that functions as one of the most rugged areas of wilderness in southern California. The valued landscape attributes to be preserved over time are the area's rugged recreation opportunities, untamed character and the mix of conifer and chaparral.

Program Emphasis: The Sespe Back Country will continue to serve as a high quality primitive recreation area and wildlife refuge for varied species, including the California condor. A focus will be on reducing risks from wildland fire to maintain ecosystem stability, and promote a natural fire regime. The focus will also be to maintain water and scenic quality and improve habitat for steelhead trout, California condors, bighorn sheep and other focal species. The Sespe Wild and Scenic River Plan will add clarification for the river corridor. Additionally, emphasis will be placed on maintaining access to national forest lands, improving recreation opportunities and facilities and improving public education about the forest ecosystem. Efforts will continue to reduce conflicts between recreationists, private landowners, and sensitive species. Emphasize the acquisition of lands to improve public access and to promote ecological stability and to reduce or eliminate use conflicts. Continue to eradicate or limit further spread of invasive nonnative species. Manage for and assist in the recovery of arroyo toads and steelhead trout in the Upper Sespe River Critical Biological Land Use Zone.

Ventana

Theme: A spectacular wilderness that offers a wide range of habitats from cool, damp coast redwood groves to hot, dry mountain peaks, and opportunities for solitude.

Setting: The majority of the Ventana Place is designated wilderness. The Place consists of remote, undeveloped wild land with deep canyons and mountain peaks approaching 5,000 feet in elevation, all within a few miles of the ocean. It has as its backbone the geologically complex, structurally faulted and folded, and locally unstable northern Santa Lucia Mountains. It is bordered on the southwest by the Big Sur coast, on the north by private land, on the east by the Arroyo Seco drainage, and on the south by Fort Hunter Liggett Military Reservation. It is well known for its remote recreation and solitude.

The Big Sur and Carmel Rivers are the main watercourses that drain to the Pacific Ocean. Waterfalls, deep pools and hot springs are found along major streams. Average annual rainfall ranges from over 100 inches near the mountain crest to less than 30 inches a few miles inland. The surprising abundance of water emanating from the national forest serves many downstream domestic and agricultural needs, especially in the Salinas Valley. Most areas east of the crest are hot and dry during the summer. Very little development has occurred within this Place; less than 5 percent of the area is private land. The mostly metamorphic, highly faulted terrain has thin outcrops of marble, and traces of other valuable minerals that have not been developed.

Marked vegetation changes partition the Place into well-defined ecosystems. These changes are attributed to dramatic climatic, topographic and geologic variations, coupled with an extensive history of fires. Much of the Ventana Place is covered by chaparral. Grass meadows, oak woodlands, open pine forest, deep canyons, coast redwood, and the Santa Lucia fir create a mosaic of vegetation across the rugged landscape. Ecosystems have recently been impacted by Sudden Oak Death, invasion of non-native species, and visitor use exceeding ecological capacity in some sites along the Big Sur River.

Wildlife is abundant, including mountain lions, wild pigs and turkeys, trout, falcons and eagles. Mountain streams support healthy fisheries, and steelhead trout inhabit some of the coastal streams.

Ventana Place. Photo by Kari Brown

The Ventana Place has a history of very large fires that affect dams, roads and human infrastructure outside the national forest and air quality. Fuel treatments have been limited by restrictions and difficult access.

Management has focused on preserving wilderness character and resources while providing opportunities for primitive recreation experiences. People are drawn here because of the big trees, its proximity to Big Sur, opportunities to hike into rugged, beautiful wild areas, and deer hunting. Scenic vistas and

spectacular topography offer opportunities for solitude and renewal of the human spirit. This Place provides opportunities for year-round wildland recreation. Visitor use exceeds capacity in some areas, causing overuse of trail camps. A vast trail system enables users to cross the wilderness; however, motorized and mechanized recreation is encroaching into the wilderness. Undeveloped campgrounds are scattered across the entire Place. The area has a rich cultural history, and some heritage resources are being affected by high public use.

Surrounding areas have had extensive mining development, but within the Ventana Place no mineral deposits for which extraction is economically feasible have been located, and the areas of wilderness are off-limits to new exploration. Most of this Place is withdrawn from mineral entry, and very little historic mining has occurred.

Some landowners have restricted access across their land, resulting in a reduction of traditional routes into the wilderness. Illegal cultivation of marijuana is occurring in remote areas of the Ventana Place.

Designated Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- Big Sur River 20.6 miles

Recommended Wild and Scenic Rivers:

- Arroyo Seco River 2.9 miles

Existing Wilderness:

- Ventana Wilderness 151,305 acres

Special Interest Areas:

- Milpitas 953 acres

Recommended Research Natural Area:

- Ventana Cones 2,220 acres

Total national forest acres--Ventana Place: 161,214

Desired Condition: The valued landscape attributes to be preserved over time are the mosaic of vegetation including the redwoods, oak woodlands, open pine forests, grasslands and chaparral mix that draw people for the big trees, and water environment with scenic vistas. Visitor use is accommodated without compromising resource values.

Program Emphasis: Maintain the wild, scenic, and rugged backcountry. Protect areas of cultural and biological significance, improve trail maintenance, increase environmental education, and resolve conflicts between users and resources. Increase Forest Service presence in the Place through increased wilderness and volunteer patrols. Emphasize vegetation treatments (such as fuels reduction, including within adjoining wilderness areas) and fire prevention to reduce the occurrence of large wildland fires. Continue emphasis on partnerships to promote resource protection efforts especially for threatened or endangered species. Maintain existing lookouts through partnerships. Address forest health issues, including the spread of Sudden Oak Death, which holds the potential to cause devastation of coastal-forested habitats.

Forest-Specific Design Criteria

Place-specific Standards

Wilderness Standards

LPNF S1- The maximum visitor group size is 25 people. Exceptions may be approved by the authorized officer.

Forest-wide Guidance

Functional management plans (both existing and anticipated) that provide more specific direction are listed below:

- Implementation Schedules
- Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive River Management Plans
- Forest Fire Management Plan
- Special Interest Area Plans
- Research Natural Area Establishment Reports and Implementation Plans
- Scenic Byway Plans
- Species Recovery Plans
- Species Guidance Documents (see Appendix H in Part 3)
- Oil and Gas Record Of Decision and Environmental Impact Statement

Performance Risks

The national forest operates in a dynamic environment, characterized by uncertainties in both internal and external operating conditions, due to fluctuations in the natural environment and the institutional environment. If events unfold in a manner that was not anticipated when this prospectus was prepared attainment of the objectives shown above will be affected.

Risks Related to the Natural Environment

Fires, insect or disease outbreaks, and other disturbances are likely to occur, and could significantly alter current conditions.

The national forest has experienced large wildland fires in the last 10 years. Where and when future fires will burn is an inexact science. If future wildland fire disturbance events exceed historical averages, or are concentrated in areas that are particularly vulnerable (i.e., urban interface, riparian areas, or special habitats), then the extent, location, and timing of management activities could all be affected.

Risks Related to the Institutional Environment

The national forest budget could differ from projections.

The trends in accomplishment of objectives shown above are dependent on the national forest receiving an operating budget that is similar to its experienced budget over the last three years. Fluctuations in the budget (either upward or downward) would likely cause a change in the direction and/or magnitude of projected accomplishments. In addition, changes in the mix of funds between program areas also have the potential to affect the rate or magnitude of performance.

National or Regional strategic initiatives may emerge in response to broad-scale issues.

This forest plan is linked to the agency's National Strategic Plan (see Part 1—Southern California National Forests Vision) that is updated every three to five years. Historically, both Congress and the Executive Branch have also instituted program initiatives outside of the forest planning process that affect much or all of the National Forest System (e.g., the Roadless Rule, the National Fire Plan, and the National Energy Policy). Such changes in national direction have the potential to add to, override, or otherwise adjust the performance objectives of the national forest.

Appendix A - Special Designation Overlays - Los Padres National Forest

Wilderness

Existing Wilderness

Chumash Wilderness	Places: Mt. Pinos	37,248 Acres

This area was established in 1992 by the Los Padres Condor Range and River Protection Act. The Chumash Wilderness is within Ventura and Kern Counties and west of Frazier Park. It includes the area surrounding Mount Pinos, which was an integral part of Chumash Indian life and is still extremely important to the local Chumash residents. Elevations range from 8,800 feet near the summit of Mount Pinos to 4,400 feet in Apache Canyon. There are numerous access points; the most popular are at Mount Pinos and Mount Abel.

The vegetation consists mainly of pine forests in the northern portion, and a combination of badlands and chaparral in the south. Hiking and camping are among the many recreation activities available in this area, and snow in the winter provides opportunities for winter recreation.

Dick Smith Wilderness	Places: San Rafael	71,350 Acres

The Dick Smith Wilderness was established in 1984 by the California Wilderness Act and is located in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, approximately 12 miles north of Santa Barbara. The writer, artist, and photographer for whom this wilderness was named was referred to by some as the "conscience of Santa Barbara" (Tilton).

The area is extremely rugged with numerous canyons and ridges. Elevations range from less than 2,000 feet in canyon bottoms to 6,541 feet at Madulce Peak. Prominent canyons include Indian, Mono, Alamar, Don Victor and Santa Barbara. The area has eight trails totaling 49 miles and eight trail camps. Vehicular access to trailheads in the Los Prietos area is limited by seasonal closures and long drive times over low-standard roads. Better access exists in the eastern portion from trailheads along California State Highway 33.

While chaparral is the predominant vegetation, Madulce Peak has some of the most beautiful stands of mixed conifers found in the national forest. The eastern portion of the area (known as the Rancho Nuevo Region) is more open with massive sandstone rock formations, chaparral, bigcone Douglas-fir and Great Basin sagebrush.

Garcia Wilderness	Places: Avenales	13,393 Acres

The Los Padres Condor Range and River Protection Act established this wilderness in 1992. It is located within San Luis Obispo County and is most easily accessed from the Lake Lopez and Pozo areas. Elevations range from 1,500 feet to 2,600 feet along the crest.

The Garcia Wilderness area offers a variety of panoramic views, solitude and a variety of lush wildflowers in spring. The terrain ranges from chaparral-covered mountains to grasslands and abundant creek-side vegetation. Two hiking trails totaling 17 miles cut through the wilderness

and there are three designated campsites. Golden eagles, peregrine falcons, and prairie falcons nest here.

Machesna Mountain Wilderness	Places: Avenales	18,303 Acres

The Machesna Mountain Wilderness was established in 1984 by the California Wilderness Act and is located within San Luis Obispo County. It can be accessed from California State Highway 58 and the Pozo area via Forest Road 29S01. Elevations range from 4,063 feet at the summit of Machesna Mountain to 1,600 feet in American Canyon.

This wilderness boasts high peaks, chaparral, oak woodlands and conifer forests. Prairie falcon and tule elk live in this wilderness, though it is best known for its critical habitat for the California condor. Two trails totaling 20 miles and one camp are found within this wilderness. The area also includes the 1,500-acre American Canyon Research Natural Area, dedicated to the study of a unique strain of Coulter pine.

Matilija Wilderness	Places: San Rafael	29,243 Acres

This wilderness was established 1992 by the Los Padres Condor Range and River Protection Act. It is located in Ventura County, 12 miles northeast of the town of Ojai and can be accessed from California State Highway 33. Elevations range from Monte Arido at 6,003 feet to 1,600 feet where the Upper North Fork of Matilija Creek leaves the wilderness. This wilderness includes the scenic canyons of both Matilija Creek and its North Fork, with year-round flowing water.

Vegetation consists primarily of chaparral, and poppies are plentiful in spring. Fishing in Matilija creek is possible at certain times of the year. There are two hiking trails through the area, and one trail has campsites along it. Visitors may observe black bear, deer, coyote, bobcat, mountain lion, rattlesnakes, hawks, eagles, and California condor.

San Rafael Wilderness	Places: San Rafael	190,968 Acres

The San Rafael Wilderness became the first primitive area in the nation designated as wilderness under the Wilderness Act of 1964 (additional acreage was added in 1992 by the Los Padres Condor Range and River Protection Act). The San Rafael Wilderness is located in the San Rafael and Sierra Madre Mountain Ranges in northern Santa Barbara County. The wilderness includes the Sisquoc Condor Sanctuary and the Sisquoc Wild and Scenic River. Elevations range from 1,160 feet (where the Sisquoc River leaves the wilderness) to 6,593 feet at the summit of San Rafael Mountain. There are over 125 miles of trails within the wilderness with numerous points of access; the most popular access is from Nira Campground.

This wilderness is mainly covered by chaparral, which consists of chamise, buckthorn, ceanothus manzanita, scrub oak and yucca. Also found here are potreros (grassy meadows). Most trails through the area follow the creeks and rivers. The two main corridors into the wilderness are the Sisquoc River and Manzana Creek. These riparian zones provide food, water, and shelter for most species of wildlife. Rainbow trout, western pond turtles, and aquatic garter snakes are found in the water. Bordering the water, western toad or pacific and California tree frogs may be found. From April through June many songbirds can be heard, such as the yellow warbler, house wren, orange-crowned warbler, and plain titmouse that nest in riparian zones. Further from the

creek, up in the brush, one can hear the calls of the scrub jay, California quail, and mountain quail.

Other points of interest include the Manzana Schoolhouse and the standing ruins of homesteads along the Sisquoc River. These sites are all that remain of a vigorous farming community that settled the flats along the river around the turn-of-the-century. The South Fork Cabin is a historic Forest Service shack that has sheltered generations of Back Country Rangers.

Santa Lucia Wilderness	Places: Cuesta	18,273 Acres

Located in San Luis Obispo County, the Santa Lucia Wilderness was established in 1978 by the Endangered American Wilderness Act. Elevations within the wilderness range from 800 feet near Lopez Reservoir to 3,000 feet near the summit of Hi Mountain. The area is most frequently accessed via the East Cuesta Ridge Road (Forest Route 30S10) and Lopez Canyon Road (Forest Route 31S06).

Chaparral-covered slopes and peaks, stream-fed valleys, Morro Rock, and the Seven Sisters are scenic images that are part of the Santa Lucia Wilderness experience. This wilderness offers numerous trails for hiking, hunting, and fishing.

Sespe Wilderness	Places: Sespe	218,507 Acres

The Sespe Wilderness was established in 1992 by the Los Padres Condor Range and River Protection Act and is located primarily within Ventura County. The wilderness includes the 53,000-acre Sespe Condor Sanctuary and the Gene Marshall-Piedra Blanca National Recreation Trail. Also found here is Sespe Creek, one of the last remaining undammed rivers in southern California. Part of Sespe Creek is a designated Wild and Scenic River (31.5 miles) with an additional 21.4 miles of Upper Sespe Creek eligible for designation. The creek is contained by sandstone cliffs, rising up to 500 feet above the water. Fabulous rock formations, along with petroglyphs and other evidence of ancient Indians, can be observed along the creek corridor (Tilton).

Elevations in the wilderness range from 7,510 feet at the Reyes Peak summit to approximately 1,000 feet where Sespe Creek leaves the wilderness. The Sespe Wilderness is mainly a chaparral-covered environment, with rock cliffs throughout. Steep, narrow gorges, picturesque pools, cascading riffles, and outstanding views of geologic formations create a unique visual experience. There are numerous trailheads, trails, and camps.

Silver Peak Wilderness	Places: Big Sur	30,311 Acres

The Silver Peak Wilderness (located in Monterey County along the famous Big Sur coastline) was established in 1992 through the Los Padres Condor Range and River Protection Act. The Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act of 2002 added 17,055 acres to the Silver Peak Wilderness. Elevations range from 3,590 feet at the summit of Silver Peak to near sea level along California State Highway 1. Numerous access points along California State Highway 1 provide access to trails. Most of the trails and camps are found in the original area of Silver Peak Wilderness.

The Willow Creek Watershed contains a stand of Douglas-fir and groves of redwoods that follow the creeks up the hillsides where they merge with the grassy meadows found on the upper slopes. Steelhead trout still spawn in the lower reaches of Willow Creek. The North Fork of Willow Creek and its tributaries wind through steep canyons on their way to the sea, some eight miles away.

Dramatic scenery, steep terrain, and coastal redwood groves characterize this area. Hiking is available on moderate to strenuous trails.

Ventana Wilderness	Places: Big Sur, Ventana, Arroyo Seco	232,411 acres

In 1931, the chief of the Forest Service set aside 45,520 acres known as the Ventana Primitive Area. This was enlarged to 55,884 acres in 1937. Since then, the area was renamed the Ventana Wilderness when it became part of the National Wilderness System in 1969, and has been enlarged four times (in 1978, 1984, 1992, and 2002); bringing its total up to the present 232,411 acres. The 1992 enlargement added 38,000 acres in the Horse Creek and Rocky Creek areas on the eastern edge of the wilderness. The Big Sur Wilderness and Conservation Act of 2002 added 37,110 acres. The wilderness lies entirely within Monterey County. Elevations range from 600 feet, where the Big Sur River leaves the Wilderness, to about 5,750 feet at the summit of Junipero Serra Peak. There are numerous access points to over 260 miles of trails.

Steep-sided, sharp-crested ridges separating V-shaped valleys characterize the topography of the Ventana Wilderness. Most streams fall rapidly through narrow, vertical-walled canyons flowing on bedrock or a veneer of boulders. Waterfalls, deep pools and thermal springs are found along major streams.

Marked vegetation changes occur within the wilderness. These changes are attributed to dramatic climate and topographic variations, coupled with an extensive fire history. Much of the Ventana Wilderness is covered by chaparral. This brushy vegetative cover is typical of that found throughout southern California's fire susceptible mountains. The contrast of annual grass meadows and open pine stands may be found throughout the wilderness. Deep narrow canyons cut by the fast moving Big Sur and Little Sur Rivers support virgin stands of coastal redwood. Small, scattered stands of the endemic bristle cone fir may be found on rocky slopes.

Recommended Wilderness

Chumash - Toad Springs (Chumash Wilderness)	Places: Mt. Pinos

The Chumash-Toad Springs area is an off-highway vehicle corridor temporarily excluded from the existing Chumash Wilderness, which was established in 1992 by the Los Padres Condor Range and River Protection Act. The Act states, "The Toad Springs road corridor delineated as potential wilderness shall remain open to off-road traffic until construction of an alternate route, which bypasses this area, is completed. These potential wilderness lands shall be automatically incorporated in and managed as part of the Chumash Wilderness upon publication of a notice in the Federal Register."

Madulce-Buckhorn (Dick Smith Wilderness)	Places: San Rafael

The portion of the Madulce-Buckhorn Roadless Area recommended for wilderness is located in Santa Barbara County, approximately 10 miles north of Santa Barbara. Elevations range from 4,926 feet at the headwaters of Buckhorn Creek to 2,000 feet where Buckhorn Creek leaves the area. Access is limited to non-motorized travel, and there are no trails within the interior of the Inventoried Roadless Area.

The area is primarily comprised of the Buckhorn Creek Watershed. The upper reaches of Buckhorn Creek maintain year-round water, with healthy rainbow trout fisheries. In the extreme northern portion of this area, there are outstanding examples of large sandstone outcrops rising out of a dense stand of mixed conifer and chaparral.

There are few opportunities for visitor access due to the dense growth of chaparral. Buckhorn Trail (Forest Trail 27W12 -which borders the area on the south) is a popular backcountry loop for mountain bikers.

Matilija (Matilija Wilderness)	Places: San Rafael.

The Matilija Roadless Area is located in Ventura County, approximately six miles northeast of the town of Ojai. Elevations range from just over 5,600 feet at the summit of Ortega Hill to 1,600 feet where the Upper North Fork of Matilija Creek leaves the area. Access is from California State Highway 33 along the Matilija Creek Road (Forest Route 5N13) and the Ortega Road (Forest Route 6N01).

The natural appearance and integrity of the area are very much intact. The area has experienced several large wildland fires, including the 1932 Matilija Fire, which was the largest wildland fire in California history (219,000 acres). Steep canyons, rugged side slopes, with more gentle ground in the large potreros characterize the area. There are several man-made improvements in the area, including Cherry Canyon Road, Ortega Trail, a buried natural gas pipeline along the eastern edge of the area, and several dozer-created fire lines.

The topography is rugged and mountainous, predominantly steep drainages with some gentle slopes in the northern area. Before the 1985 Wheeler Fire (118,000 acres), the vegetation was mainly chaparral with minor amounts of conifer and pinyon-juniper. Wildlife consists of bear,

deer, mountain lion, bobcat, and coyote; smaller species include fox, mountain and valley quail, rabbit, raccoon, and gray squirrels.

Mono (Dick Smith Wilderness)	Places: San Rafael

The Mono Roadless Area is located in Santa Barbara County approximately 10 miles north of Santa Barbara. Elevations range from Hildreth Peak at 5,065 feet to 1,600 feet, where Mono Creek leaves the area. The area is surrounded by existing administrative jeep-ways. Access is limited to non-motorized travel originating primarily from Mono Campground. The Mono/Alamar Trail and a portion of the Poplar Trail comprise 10 miles of non-motorized trails within the area. The Mono/Alamar Trail does receive some mountain bike use. Mountain bikers also use the 25-mile Loma-Victor Jeepway from the Monte Arido Road to an area just south of Ogilvy Ranch for extended remote travel and dispersed camping.

The Mono Creek drainage offers miles of outstanding natural features. The towering steep canyon walls of the Narrows, deep pools along Mono Creek, limestone and sandstone outcroppings, and the large expansive rolling grass potreros of Loma Pelona are classic backdrops for wilderness discovery.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Designated

Sespe Creek	Places: Highway 33 Corridor, 4.7 miles; and Sespe, 24.3 miles	31.5 Miles (27.5 Miles, Wild; 4 Miles, Scenic)

Interesting geologic formations, unusual gorges, and rich riparian vegetation provide excellent scenic diversity and recreation opportunities. This stream is considered an outstanding rainbow trout fishery and provides critical habitat for the endangered California condor (www.nps.gov).

Big Sur River	Places: Ventana, 20.6 miles	20.6 Miles, Wild

Located in the Ventana Wilderness, this river offers outstanding opportunities for hiking, camping, swimming and fishing. It is one of the longest coastal California streams lined with redwoods (www.nps.gov).

Sisquoc River	Places: San Rafael 32.6 miles; and Figueroa-Santa Ynez, 1.9 miles	Sisquoc Creek: 34.6 Miles, Wild

Most of this river lies within the San Rafael Wilderness. It offers excellent opportunities for solitude, wilderness-oriented activities, and appreciation of the outstanding scenery (www.nps.gov).

Wild and Scenic Rivers, Recommended for Designation

Piru Creek	Places: Sespe, 5.8 miles; and Hungry Valley/Mutau, 32.8 miles

The upper portions of Piru Creek (those below a point in the Sespe Wilderness in the southwest corner of Township 6 N., Range 22 W., Section 3 to the maximum pool of Pyramid Lake) have been found suitable for classification as either a wild or scenic river. Upper Piru Creek provides an outstandingly remarkable opportunity to recreate in and along a year-round stream. The faults and rock formations found along the Creek include important features crucial to the understanding of the very complex structural and geomorphic evolution of the west coast of North America. Along the upper portion of Piru Creek, exposures of the oldest basement rocks in the coastal mountains of the western United States are considered to be outstandingly remarkable. This portion of the Piru Creek supports a population of arroyo toads, and the scientific and interpretive values offered by several of the prehistoric/ethnographic sites constitute outstandingly remarkable values.

Sespe Creek	Places: Highway 33 Corridor, 11.5 miles

The portion of Sespe Creek that originates in the confluence of Chorro Grande Canyon in Township 6 N., Range 23 W., Section 21, and extends to the confluence of Rock Creek in the

northwest ¼ mile of Township 5 N., Range 22 W., Section 5 has been found suitable for designation as either a recreation or scenic river. A 31.5-mile segment of Sespe Creek, from its confluence with Rock Creek and Howard Creek downstream to where it leaves section 26, T5N, R20W, received designation as a Wild/Scenic River in 1992. Sespe Creek has exemplary visual features, including contrasts created by large rock outcroppings and seasonal colors, and water that attracts regional and national attention. Below Chorro Grande Canyon, Sespe Creek offers excellent dispersed recreation opportunities, such as swimming and wading, picnicking, backpacking, hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, rock climbing, hunting, fishing, photography, driving for pleasure and viewing scenery on the adjacent scenic byway. Also, the resident population of arroyo toads in upper Sespe Creek is one of the largest within one hundred miles. Intact habitat for southern steelhead trout and southwestern willow flycatcher habitat is also outstandingly remarkable, because samples of this intact habitat are very rare on the Los Padres National Forest and in the national forests of southern California.

Arroyo Seco River	Places: Ventana, 2.9 miles; and Arroyo Seco, 15.1 miles

Steep canyon walls, gorges, rock outcrops, and jumbles of boulders that create pools and dramatic sounds characterize the dynamic setting of the Arroyo Seco River corridor, which has been found suitable for designation as a Wild and Scenic River. Many sections of the river (especially in the gorge and the many deep pools upstream) offer opportunities for solitude and challenge. These unique recreation opportunities are considered outstandingly remarkable. Geologically, the river also possesses significant and remarkable features, as it exposes the relationship of rocks and geologic structural features in the Salinian Block that are important as research areas to aid in understanding important tectonic and seismic processes along the California continental margin. Finally, the Arroyo Seco is the middle link of an anadromous fishery and provides habitat for the federally threatened steelhead fish.

Research Natural Areas

Established

American Canyon	1,529 acres	Places: Avenales

The 1,529-acre American Canyon Research Natural Area is located within the Machesna Mountain Wilderness on the Santa Lucia Ranger District. Coulter pine occurs in abundance here as dispersed, generally even-aged stands of varying size and density. Fires swept through the southeast and northwest portions of the basin in 1921 and 1939 respectively. Most of the stands date back to those fires; however, ridgetop and canyon bottom stands spared from the fires contain older trees. The associated chaparral is dominated by chamise and Eastwood manzanita.

An approved off-road vehicle trail runs along the east-west ridge of the basin. Other recreation use in the area consists mostly of hunting.

Black Butte	940 acres	Places: Cuesta

This 940-acre RNA is situated on the steep, generally northwest-facing slopes of Cuesta Ridge in the Santa Lucia Wilderness. Knobcone pine-chaparral is the target vegetation type and is found on north and northeast slopes as scattered groves and occasional continuous areas. Chaparral species, principally chamise, manzanita, and the sensitive Santa Lucia manzanita occupy the areas between pine stands. The intermittant streams that drain into the Black Butte RNA support riparian vegetation composed of coast live oak, California bay, tanoak, and bigleaf maple. There are no trails located within the RNA.

San Emigdio Mesa	1,239 acres	Places: Mt. Pinos

The San Emigdio RNA encompasses 1,239 acres of a large alluvial fan, dissected by several intermittent stream channels and gullies on the Mt. Pinos Ranger District. The target vegetation type is pinyon-juniper woodland. Pinyon pine (the dominant tree species) averages 15 to 20 feet in height and is evenly distributed over the entire area in low to moderate densities. Of the three common brush species (California juniper, big sagebrush, and dwarf oak), dwarf oak is by the far the most abundant. Some hunting may occur in the area, but there are no hiking or off-road vehicle trails through the RNA.

Cone Peak Gradient	2,734 acres	Places: Big Sur

The Cone Peak Gradient RNA (a 2,734-acre area) is remarkable for its ecological diversity. Within a three-mile horizontal distance inland from the Monterey coast, the mountains rise from sea level to 5,000 feet. The resulting elevational and climatic gradient has 12 plant communities including canyon live oak woodland, mixed evergreen forest, coast live oak woodland, coast redwood and chaparral. The RNA lies within the Ventana Wilderness, and several trails traverse the area.

Proposed

Big Pine Mountain	3,258 acres	Places: San Rafael

The Big Pine Mountain proposed RNA is located on the Santa Barbara Ranger District about 19 miles north of the city of Santa Barbara. Encompassing 3,258 acres, the RNA lies between 3,600 to 6,828 feet in elevation. The topography of the area is characterized by a level summit that changes quickly to a moderately steep to steep north-facing slope. Side canyons vary from relatively gradual slopes to steep pitches with occasional waterfalls.

Plant communities within the RNA are highly varied and strongly influenced by the 3,000-foot change in elevation within the area. Jeffrey pine forests occupy the summit and mixed conifer forests spread down the upper north slope. Coulter pine forests, canyon live oak forests, bigcone Douglas-fir/canyon live oak forests are below the montane forests and above northern mixed chaparral that dominates the lowest elevations. The Buckhorn Road traverses the upper southeast corner of the area. Road access is for administrative use only. Trails skirt the southern and northeastern boundaries of the area; however, recreational backpacking and hunting use are very light. This proposed RNA is an excellent example of high-elevation montane vegetation types that are compressed into a steep elevational gradient. The area also harbors two rare plant species and a number of animal species of special concern.

Sawmill Mountain	3,451 acres	Places: Mt. Pinos

The Sawmill Mountain proposed RNA is located on the Mt. Pinos Ranger District about 12 miles west of Frazier Park, within the Chumash Wilderness. The 3,451-acre area reaches from 6,250 to 8,750 feet in elevation, and the topography is characterized by small peaks and ridges, and steep and moderately steep slopes with narrow drainages.

Jeffrey pine forests and Jeffrey pine-singleleaf pinyon/canyon live oak woodlands and forests are present on the south facing slopes, while Jeffrey pine-white fir forests dominate mesic, north-facing slopes. Small islands of mountain meadow vegetation are scattered throughout the area. The RNA also contains portions of two sub-watersheds, one that drains into San Emigdio and Cuddy Creeks to the south and the other that drains into Dry and Apache Canyons to the north. Since the area lies within designated wilderness, it is closed to motorized use, and no roads are present in it. The two trails traversing the area are used for hiking, primitive camping and Nordic skiing.

This RNA is in very good to excellent ecological condition and contributes to the Region 5 network; a typical example of southern California Jeffrey pine and white fir forests, as well as undisturbed mountain meadows. Recreation use is low and confined to trails, and access for research is good.

White Mountain	2,104 acres	Places: Sespe and Hungry Valley/Mutau

Located on the Mt. Pinos Ranger District about 15 miles southeast of Frazier Park, the White Mountain proposed RNA encompasses approximately 2,104 acres. An expansive, dissected, relatively steep northeast facing exposure with a long, relatively narrow ridge characterizes the area's topography. Elevations range from 3,200 to 6,200 feet. Bigcone Douglas-fir and mixed conifer pine forests cover the entire elevational range of the area; they intermix with large areas of lower montane chaparral. Canyon live oak forests are juxtaposed to both types of coniferous and small patches of montane riparian vegetation that occur at the lowest elevations. Part of the Buck Creek Watershed that drains into the Pyramid Reservoir is located within this proposed RNA.

No motorized use is permitted on the proposed site, and no designated trails exist within the area. This RNA is in excellent condition and offers good examples of bigcone Douglas-fir forests and other montane vegetation types.

Valley Oak	108 acres	Places: Arroyo Seco

The 108-acre proposed Valley Oak RNA is located on the Monterey Ranger District about 18 miles west of King City on the western boundary of the Hunter-Liggett Military Reservation. Landforms that characterize this area include gently sloping alluvial terraces dissected by small arroyos and minor rills, along with a well-developed sandstone outcrop. Elevations here range from 1,550 to 2,465 feet.

The Valley Oak proposed RNA has one of the few remaining examples of valley oak woodlands on public lands in California. The proposed area has open woodlands of large, stately trees, and a significant area of younger, dense forests. Other vegetation types include blue oak woodlands, California annual grasslands, chamise chaparral, coastal sage scrub and riparian vegetation along the San Antonio River.

The proposed RNA represents a small part of a much larger watershed that drains into the San Antonio River. It is also located within the 2,200-acre Upper Milpitas Allotment that has a long history of grazing.

A paved, well-used county road passes through the area. As a consequence, there are a number of uses inconsistent with RNA designation such as recreational target shooting, illegal dispersed camping, fishing and rock climbing. No designated trails fall within the proposed area. This proposed RNA is in fair to good ecological condition and represents one of the few remaining areas on the Central Coast that offer research opportunities in valley oak.

Ventana Cones	2,220 acres	Places: Ventana

The Ventana Cones proposed RNA is located on the Monterey Ranger District about 32 miles west of King City in the heart of the Ventana Wilderness. The topography of the 2,220-acre area is defined by a steep, west-facing slope with numerous rock outcrops and narrow canyons. Elevations range from 2,000 to 4,700 feet.

This proposed RNA was selected to represent the narrow endemic Santa Lucia fir, as well as associated rock-outcrop vegetation, including hardwood forests composed of tanoak, madrone and California bay. The Santa Lucia fir occurs both in single-species stands and mixed with canyon live oak and other hardwoods. Fir stands are patchily distributed within this area often around rock outcrops.

The area is part of a much larger watershed that drains into the Carmel River. There is one designated trail through the area leading to the Ventana Double Cone.

Special Interest Areas

Cuesta Ridge	Botanical	Places: Cuesta

Established in 1969, the Cuesta Botanical Area covers 1,304 acres of serpentine Sargent cypress (*Cupressus sargentii*), but also includes small stands of Coulter pine (*Pinus coulteri*). In addition to being the largest area of Sargent cypress on the national forest, the area is of special importance because it provides important habitat for the following sensitive plants: Cuesta Pass checkerbloom (*Sidalcea bickmanii spp. anomala*), San Luis sedge (*Carex obispoensis*), San Luis mariposa lily (*Calochortus obispoensis*), and Brewer's spineflower (*Chorizanthe breweri*). In 1994, the Highway 41 Fire burned through the botanical area destroying most of the Sargent cypress trees. However, the year after the fire, botanists found thousands of Sargent cypress seedlings. In a similar fashion, thousands of Cuesta Pass checkerbloom plants appeared where previously there were only known to be 50. This illustrates the resiliency of the botanical area and its vegetation to wildland fire.

Dry Lakes Ridge	Botanical	Places: Highway 33 Corridor

The Dry Lakes Ridge Special Interest Area (SIA) (located in Ventura County) was set aside for its outstanding botanical values. The area encompasses over 400 acres of dry lakes formed from a relatively small internal basin located at the axis of a steeply folded anticline. Of botanical and scientific interest are the disjunct relict plant species including *Lotus stipularis*, *Rhus trilobata quinata*, *Apoxynum pumilum*, and *Chrysothasmnus nauseosus consumilis*, none of which are found on nearby ridges. In addition, there are remnant stands of *Pinus ponderosa*.

Mount Pinos Summit	Botanical	Places: Mt. Pinos

Located in Ventura and Kern Counties, the 450-acre Mount Pinos SIA was designated for its unique botanical values. The species of special interest is limber pine, which grows in two relatively small areas (less than 20 acres) on Mt. Pinos and Sawmill Mountain above 8,000-feet in elevation. These pine trees are the only representatives of southern California subalpine forest on the Los Padres National Forest.

Quatal Canyon	Geological	Places: Mt. Pinos

Quatal Canyon SIA (located in Ventura and Kern Counties) was set aside for its unique geological attributes. The area as viewed from Quatal Canyon clearly has a distinctive geomorphic character when compared with the surrounding terrain. Vertical pedestals and eroded cliffs of folded buff and iron-stained sandstone beds (Caliente Formation) have been sculpted by surface waters. The results are channels and near vertical slopes of loose debris which disgorge onto Quatal Canyon Valley. Soils are so thin that little or no vegetation grows. The area shows a unique terrain, which is being eroded so fast that soil profiles cannot develop. Indeed, the area allows anyone interested in earth science to observe how quickly the bedrock history of the national forest can be erased by water erosion, even in a desert climate.

The site provides scenic qualities to the Los Padres National Forest. The valley generally contrasts sharply with the buff and red colored sandstone, which has little vegetation. The area offers outstanding examples of geology and the processes which shaped, and are shaping, the forest mountains and valleys.

Sierra Madre	Cultural and Archeoastronomy	Places: San Rafael, and Cuyama-Highway 166 Front

The Sierra Madre SIA contains unique cultural resources. The 5,592-acre site expands upon the Eastern Sierra Madre Ridge Archeological District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register District was established in 1978 and encompasses an area containing significant cultural values related to rock art, other archeological sites, and traditional values of importance to contemporary Native Americans. It is also an important location for on-going research by specialists interested in archeoastronomy. Special treatment for this area began in the 1960s, with its exclusion from the San Rafael Wilderness Area, primarily to allow continued essential access to the Sierra Madre Ridge; although excluded, the Forest Service at that time made a commitment to encouraging research and preserving the important cultural values of the area.

Alder Creek	Botanical	Places: Big Sur

Located in Monterey County, the Alder Creek Special Interest Area was set aside for its unique botanical values. The 17-acre site includes Sargent cypress with a number of other rare endemic plant species, including the sensitive species Hardham's bedstraw.

Lion Den Spring	Botanical	Places: Big Sur

Located in Monterey County, Lion Den Spring Special Interest Area (SIA) was designated for its unique botanical values. Like Alder Creek SIA, this site also has a Sargent cypress grove. It covers 81 acres and has only a few endemics, including Hardham's bedstraw (a Region 5 sensitive species). The two areas complement one another well and provide a good representation of Sargent cypress endemics.

Southern Redwood	Botanical	Places: Big Sur

The Southern Redwood Special Interest Area has been designated for its unique botanical values. Located in Monterey County, it encompasses the southern most stand of natural redwood. The area is small (17 acres) and narrow, since redwood at this latitude usually occur along streams.

Foster Bear Ponds	Ecology/Research/Education-Interpretation	Places: Hungry Valley/Mutau

Acres: 197

Description of values: The Foster Bear Ponds (as a collection of vernal pools and one pond are popularly called) form the nucleus of an area that provides habitat for several rare plants and animals. Two endangered species and three Region 5 sensitive species are present; each in distinctly different habitats, and each with unique geographic distributions that are alike in one

respect: each of these five species (though rare) have geographic distributions that are fairly wide and consist of relatively isolated, disjunct populations. In the vernal pools, at least two species of federally listed fairy shrimp (Conservancy fairy shrimp and vernal pool fairy shrimp) are found. These vernal pools are unique in that they occur in a montane setting, surrounded by pine forest, near the top of a watershed. Odd geologic folding has created the setting for the vernal pools, which in some years never fill with water and in others are wet for several consecutive months. One pool is large enough to be classified as a pond, and it provides habitat for a different suite of aquatic invertebrates. Natural aquatic habitats (especially vernal pools, ponds, and lakes) are very rare in the western Transverse Range.

Four types of vegetation are present within a relatively small area: on the Lockwood clay pale-yellow layia (*Layia heterotricha*) is found; on the margins of the vernal pools is Baja navarretia (*Navarretia peninsularis*); on open, buckwheat covered flats is pine-green gentian (*Swertia neglecta*); and in the pinyon woodlands, flax-like monardella (*Monardella linoides ssp. oblonga*). All of these plants are sensitive. The Lockwood clay soil provides habitat for an assemblage of plants that is repeated elsewhere, wherever Lockwood clay is found. Lockwood clay has a limited distribution in the western Transverse Range and in some areas the clay is mined for use in aggregate. Other plants in this assemblage include stink bells (*Fritillaria agrestis*), Mt. Pinos onion (*Allium howellii var. clokeyi*), and heart-leaf thornmint (*Acanthomintha obovata ssp. cordata*). The buckwheat (*Eriogonum wrightii ssp. subscaposum*) covered flats appear to have a 'pebble plain' appearance. Odd associates include bitterroot (*Lewisia rediviva*) and desert mariposa (*Calochortus kennedyi*).

The area provides ecologists and biogeographers the opportunity to study ecological relations, gene flow, population biology, and migration theory. The Foster Bear Ponds area also provides excellent opportunities for guided and self-guided interpretation.

The Foster Bear Ponds is not a well-known location and currently experiences little scientific attention and little recreation use. The primary recreation use is hunting and dispersed (roadside) camping. The area is within the Piru Allotment.

Description of area: The Foster Bear Ponds Botanical Special Interest Area is in a saddle between the upper headwaters of Lockwood Creek and Piru Creek near San Guillermo Mountain.

Access: Interstate 5 to Frazier Mountain Road, west to Lockwood Valley Road, west on Lockwood Valley Road about 9 miles to Forest Road 7N03 (Grade Valley Road), south on Grade Valley Road about 1.6 miles.

Desired condition: Habitats remain largely unaltered and as close to natural potential as possible. Recreation remains at current levels or increases five to fifteen percent, with increased emphasis on interpreting and appreciating natural history.

Camatta	Ecology/Research/Education-Interpretation	Places: Pozo/La Panza

Acres: 55

Description of values: The Red Hill Road is so-named because of the red soil that is evident atop the old plateau where the Red Hill Road begins. On either side of this plateau, erosion has worn away the side and washed away the red soil. Chamise chaparral and blue oak woodlands are found on the slopes and bottomlands; however, the area bisected by the Red Hill Road is a savannah at best, as the thin, rocky red soil is apparently inhospitable to tree and shrub. The vegetation of the botanical special interest area is not well described in the ecological literature and is best termed flower fields. Nonnative annuals such as filaree and foxtail are present, but native annuals and perennials form a dominant component of the vegetation and feature one threatened species (Camatta Canyon amole) and a second narrow endemic (*Dwarf calycadenia*). Camatta Canyon amole (*Chlorogalum purpureum reductum*) is a threatened species and is found only in this area, partly on private land and mostly on National Forest System land. Dwarf Calycadenia (*Calycadenia villosa*) is a sensitive species and this form of the species is apparently restricted to about four locations, all of which are in or adjacent to the La Panza Range. The soil type here is unique and is apparently found nowhere else.

The area provides ecologists and biogeographers an opportunity to study ecological relations, gene flow, population biology, and effects of grazing. The Red Hill Road area also provides excellent opportunities for guided and self-guided interpretation.

The Red Hill Road area is a well-known location. Botanists visit the area in the spring to enjoy wildflowers and to see rare plants. Stargazers occasionally gather at night in the open plateau. Off-highway vehicle riders often stage from an informal parking area located along Red Hill Road. Campers and picnickers occasionally use the area for dispersed recreation. The area is within the Navajo Allotment.

Description of area: The Red Hill Road botanical Special Interest Area is located on the border of the national forest near the La Panza Range.

Access: From California State Highway 101, east on California State Highway 58, or from Interstate 5, west on California State Highway 58, to Forest Road 29S15 (Red Hill Road). The botanical Special Interest Area is immediately south of the intersection of California State Highway 58 and Red Hill Road.

Desired condition: Vegetation is not adversely affected and natural disturbance processes function within historic range of variability. Recreation use is mostly in the form of non-motorized day-use with increased emphasis on interpreting and appreciating natural history.

Mono Basin	Ecology/Research/Education-Interpretation/Recreation	Places: Figueroa-Santa Ynez, and San Rafael

Acres: 9,120

Description of values: The Mono Basin area in the upper Santa Ynez Watershed has long been recognized for the richness of its biodiversity, unmatched by any other area of comparable size in the national forests of southern California. This feature is made possible by the diversity and condition of the habitats in the basin, which includes various age classes and conditions of most upland and riparian/aquatic types. The upland areas are characterized by chaparral (xeric to mesic) on west to south facing slopes, various live and valley oak woodlands along canyons and valley bottoms and potrero grassland scattered throughout, but especially along mid slopes and ridge systems.

The area's aquatic and riparian habitats make the biggest contribution to the area's biodiversity. These habitats include one of the largest and most intact mid-elevation cottonwood/willow riparian woodland in southern California. Over 100 species of birds are known to nest or have otherwise been detected in this habitat. Over 60 of these species are neotropical migrants. Two of these migrants are listed under the State and Federal Endangered Species Acts (ESA); the least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher, both endangered. The least Bell's vireo is known to nest and for that reason most of the habitat has been federally designated as critical to species recovery. This is the only such habitat on the Los Padres National Forest. Although the flycatcher is not known to nest, suitable habitat does exist and future nest surveys may be successful. There is a remarkable assemblage of reptiles and amphibians associated with the habitat, including the endangered arroyo toad and threatened California red-legged frog. In fact, the Mono Basin area is the only location on the Los Padres National Forest where the two coexist. Although widespread in proper habitat throughout the Los Padres National Forest, populations of two-striped garter snakes and southwestern pond turtles (both sensitive) are thought to be the largest and most secure on the Los Padres National Forest.

The highlands on the north side of this ecological area are within the Sisquoc-San Rafael Condor Area, which is federally designated as critical to California condor (federally and state endangered) recovery. There are several historic California condor nest sites in this area.

The scientific community is very interested in the Mono Basin area. Intensive studies of the least Bell's vireo breeding population, riparian bird community in general, and brown-headed cowbird-least Bell's vireo relationships have been and continue to be investigated in Mono Basin.

The Upper Santa Ynez Recreation Area (three campgrounds) receives moderate use by the public with most occurring during the late summer/fall hunting season.

Description of area: This ecological area is in the upper Santa Ynez Watershed in Santa Barbara County. It encompasses the Mono, Indian, Blue, Big and Little Caliente subbasins in their entirety and includes that section of the Santa Ynez basin from Alder Creek to Gibraltar Reservoir.

Access: California State Highway 154 to East Camino Cielo to Forest Road 5N15 (Pendola Road) to Mono Campground; a distance of about 25 miles or two hours from Highway 154.

Desired condition: Habitats remain largely unaltered and as close to natural potential as possible. Recreation remains at current levels.

Milpitas	Cultural	Places: Arroyo Seco, and Ventana

Acres: 9,948

Description of Values:

The Milpitas area is commonly known as 'the Indians,' a name reflecting continuous Native American occupation from prehistoric through historic times. The special interest area lies within a spectacular setting of oak savannah and rock outcrops, including massive sandstone outcrops formed under an ancient sea.

The special interest area contains abundant prehistoric sites, including habitation, food processing, and rock art sites. Current knowledge of these sites indicates that deer, rabbit, and acorns were important local dietary items, and shellfish indicate an association with the coast.

Ethnographically, the area is attributed to the Antoniano (a name derived from Mission San Antonio) Salinan peoples. It lies approximately 17 miles from Mission San Antonio, one of the earliest California missions. Historic sites within the special interest area include an adobe and adjacent vineyard. Mission occupants are thought to have used the location of the adobe (the existing building probably dates to a later period) and possibly the existing vineyard, although documentation is currently lacking.

After secularization of the missions in the 1830s (with the change from the Spanish to Mexican period), many mission residents returned to the Milpitas area, forming a historically documented community that eventually lent the area the name 'the Indians.' The name 'Milpitas' came into use in the mid-1800s, because of the fields of corn grown by native peoples. (Milpitas is the diminutive form of Milpa, a place where corn grows.)

The Encinales (descended from the original inhabitants of the Mipitas area) were among the post-mission inhabitants of the area. Eusebio Encinales is believed to have settled in the area in the 1870s, subsequently acquiring a 100 acre parcel including the adobe and vineyard from Faxton Atherton (or his estate), the owner of the extensive Rancho Milpitas grant. The Encinales continued strong associations with the mission and were mainstays of the resident native community. Today, the family and community cemetery (lying within the special interest area near the adobe and vineyard) is visited by descendants and other Salinans.

The Encinales are also known for their contributions to ethnographic knowledge of the Salinan vocabulary. Early ethnographers C. Hart Merriam and J.R. Harrington completed some (regrettably limited) records of Salinan words based on their work with native peoples of the area, particularly the Encinales. Several place-names ethnographically documented for the Milpitas area suggest the continuing importance of the area to Salinans. Traditional uses continue to occur, and the special interest area boundaries include Junipero Serra Peak, considered the center of the Salinan universe.

Description of Area: Milpitas is located in the upper watershed of the perennial San Antonio River, a tributary to the Salinas River. The landscape is relatively flat oak savannah surrounded by steep chaparral slopes. It is dominated by large, stately valley oaks and often massive rock

outcroppings, of which some rise dramatically in the uppermost reaches of the watershed divide separating the San Antonio River from the Arroyo Seco River.

Access: Vehicle access is through Fort Hunter Liggett, a military base accessed by Monterey County Road G-20, which is accessed from California State Highway 101.

Desired condition: Protect the scenic nature of the area, which constitutes the cultural landscape and is an important part of the cultural values, and the cultural sites. Minimize the numerous unimproved dirt roads that cross the savannahs, bisecting cultural sites, using physical barriers compatible with the scenic values. Control off-road vehicle use, camping, and fires, especially in and around the rock outcrops, to protect cultural sites. Where appropriate enhance the sites through public interpretation. Where needed provide a suitable combination of public education and regulations to protect the rock outcrops and other aspects of the setting where the area is being damaged by various recreation activities (including use of mountain bikes). Management of the area could include installation of an unobtrusive Forest Service radio repeater on Junipero Serra Peak to provide communication coverage for employee and public safety.

Appendix B - Program Strategies and Tactics

This section describes the detailed program strategies that the national forest may choose to make progress toward achieving the desired conditions and goals discussed in Part 1. The national forest will prioritize which strategies will be brought forward in any given year using the program emphasis objectives, national and regional direction, and available funding. Lists of more specific tactics are included to help the reader understand what may be involved in implementing these strategies. **Please note, not all of the strategies are numbered consecutively. The strategies listed in Appendix B are those the Los Padres National Forest managers intent to emphasize in the next 3-5 years (2006 through 2008-2010).**

Tribal 1 - Traditional and Contemporary Uses

Allow traditional uses, and access to traditionally used areas (as well as contemporary uses and needs) to tribal and other Native American interests:

- Protect, conserve, and restore traditionally used resources. Opportunities for traditional use of the national forest and national forest resources are improved and provisions are made to offer access to sites with cultural significance. Use opportunities during project planning and implementation to identify, enhance, and protect traditionally used resources.
- Maintain opportunities for spiritual solitude for tribal groups and individuals. Retain the character of traditional sites in conditions consistent with traditional cultural uses.
- Establish effective partnerships to address issues of mutual concern (plant material propagation, etc.).
- Work collaboratively with tribes to determine appropriate locations and levels for gathering traditional plant materials.

Tribal 2 - Government to Government Relations

Establish effective relationships with federally recognized tribes:

- Using the National Tribal Relations Strategy develop government-to-government protocols with all recognized tribes and interested parties protocols for organized groups of local Native Americans within this planning cycle.
- Promote collaborative partnerships for heritage resource management, ecosystem restoration, comprehensive fire planning, and to recognize historic Native American access rights to land areas and resources.
- Promote implementation of NAGPRA with local federally recognized tribes.

AM 1 - Land Management Plan Monitoring and Evaluation

Report the results of forest plan monitoring and evaluation questions in the annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report, including the actions taken to respond to new information learned through the adaptive management cycle:

- Amend the forest plan as necessary in response to monitoring and evaluation.
- Implement adaptive management measures designed to redirect activity outcomes toward improved environmental protection.
- Manage recreation opportunities to respond to changing visitor demographic profiles.

Linked to National Strategic Plan

Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objective 5.

AM 2 - Forest-wide Inventory

- AM 2 - Forest-wide Inventory - Develop and maintain the capacity (processes and systems) to provide and analyze the scientific and technical information needed to address agency priorities including:
- Develop the capacity use existing databases and monitor the results to track and display the cumulative effects of forest plan implementation.
- Conduct surveys within suitable habitat to determine presence of threatened and endangered species.
- Survey suitable habitat for federally listed and Region 5 sensitive species. Update all maps and databases as information is obtained.
- Survey wetlands, vernal pools, meadows, springs and stringer meadows for plant and wildlife species (i.e., spring snails, etc.).
- Identify and map all riparian areas.
- Inventory geologic resources (i.e., fossils, caves, groundwater basins and extractions, geologic special interest areas, geologic features along scenic corridors, etc.) that are available to the public, affecting other resource areas, or needing special management or protection.
- Identify and mitigate geologic hazards (i.e., seismic activity, landslides, land subsidence, flooding and erosion) through landscape and watershed planning, sediment placement site planning, engineering design, reclamation and maintenance.
- Inventory water extractions, diversions, miles/acres of streams, acres of water bodies, acres of riparian, etc.,.
- Study and identify how rock types and geomorphic processes directly affect soil type development, geo-technical conditions for excavations and construction activities, vegetative type distribution and development, and variation in species habitat. Develop an improved

understanding of the relationships of geologic resources and hazards to ecologic functions and patterns as they apply to the management of National Forest System lands and the effects of fire.

- Conduct integrated inventories of ecologic functions (ecological unit inventory) at the scale appropriate to the need.
- Complete invasive nonnative plant and animal inventories based on regional protocol methods.
- Work with the appropriate agencies and academic sources to develop protocols and survey guidelines, gathering current information and identifying additional research needs for resource management. Implement research as opportunities occur. Priority wildlife studies:
- Ecological revegetation and restoration and mine reclamation techniques.
- Effects of nonnative species and effects of management activities on threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitat.
- Effects of cowbird interactions on vireos and flycatchers.
- Best methods for removal of exotic species (i.e., bullfrog, etc.).
- Results of the removal of non-native species from threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitat.
- Effects of off-highway vehicle disturbances and other recreation activities on wildlife.
- Validation of use of habitat linkages.
- Effects of forest product removal on other resources.
- Effects of management activities on oak regeneration.
- Additional information on species-specific habitat use and distribution on National Forest System land.
- Validation of watershed standards for cumulative effects (less than 20 percent manipulation/yr and less than 40 percent over five years).
- Effect of Sudden Oak Death on other natural resources and potential for increased wildland fires.

Linked to National Strategic Plan

Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objective 1; and

Goal 5 - Improve watershed condition, objective 3.

WL 1 - Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate, and Sensitive Species Management

WL 1 - Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate, and Sensitive Species Management

Manage habitat to move listed species toward recovery and de-listing. Prevent listing of proposed and sensitive species.

- Implement priority conservation strategies (see Table 530. Los Padres NF Conservation Strategy).
- Use vegetation management practices to reduce habitat loss due to catastrophic fires.
- Work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries to develop recovery plans for federally listed species. Implement Forest Service actions as recommended in recovery plans for federally listed species.
- Establish and maintain a working relationship with county and city planning departments to ensure coordination on those development projects that are in close proximity to the national forest.
- Coordinate with California Department of Fish and Game regarding fish stocking and nonnative fisheries management to implement measures to resolve conflicts with threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species and habitats.
- Cooperate with federal and state agencies and non-governmental organizations, to conduct educational, interpretive, and other management activities to reduce the use of lead ammunition and other sources of toxic materials that are harmful to wildlife.

Table 530. Los Padres NF Conservation Strategy

Conservation Strategy Emphasis – Priority tasks for next 3-5 years.

Strategy	Specific Species
Education/ Information/ Interpretation	**Importance of riparian and aquatic species and habitat:** Pacific lamprey, southern steelhead and other native fishes, arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, coast range newt, southern Pacific pond turtle, American dipper, southwestern willow flycatcher, *Lilium humboldtii* ssp. *ocellatum*, and *Horkelia yadonii*
	Value of vegetation management to species at risk: California spotted owl
	Importance of keeping vehicles on roads: fairy shrimp, arroyo toad, and *Chorogalum purpureum* var. *reductum*
	Importance of keeping foot traffic on wilderness trails: Smith's blue butterfly, *Delphinium hutchinsoniae*, and *Pedicularis dudleyi*
	Habitat fragmentation, species linkages and corridors and biological diversity: mountain lion and Nelson's bighorn sheep
	Habitat disturbance: western snowy plover
	Importance of reducing exposure of wildlife to lead poisoning: California condor
Strategy	Specific Species
Survey/ Inventory/ Increase Knowledge Base	**Riparian and aquatic species:** aquatic invertebrates, Pacific lamprey,southern steelhead and other native fishes, southern Pacific pond turtle, two-striped garter snake, and *Lilium humboldtii* ssp. *ocellatum*
	Terrestrial species: mountain lion and Nelson's bighorn sheep
	Upland plants: *Camissonia hardhamiae*, *Delphinium hutchinsoniae*, *Pedicularis dudleyi*, *Lupinus ludovicianus*, *Oxytheca parishii* var. *abramsii*, *Plagiobothrys uncinatus*, and *Sanicula maritima*

Strategy	Specific Species
Habitat Restoration/ Improvement	**Stream channel and streambank restoration and stabilization:** Pacific lamprey, southern steelhead and other native fishes, and southwestern willow flycatcher
	Control of invasive, nonnative species (water loving plant species such as arundo and tamarisk, warm water fish, bullfrogs, and weeds in the upland areas): Pacific lamprey, southern steelhead and other native fishes, arroyo toad, coast range newt, and southern Pacific pond turtle
	Control of feral animals (such as sheep, dogs, pigs, and cattle): Nelson's bighorn sheep
	Vegetation and fuel treatments, prescribed burning: Pacific lamprey, southern steelhead and other native fishes, arroyo toad, coast range newt, southern Pacific pond turtle, California spotted owl, purple martin, Nelson's bighorn sheep, *Malacothamnus palmeria* var. *palmeri*, *Sidalcea hickmanii* ssp. *parishii*, and *Thermopsis macrophylla*
Strategy	Specific Species
Monitor/ Study	**Generally, focus on federally listed species:**
	Riparian or aquatic species: fairy shrimp, southern steelhead, arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, least Bell's vireo, and southwestern willow flycatcher
	Species responsive to vegetation treatments: California spotted owl and Nelson's bighorn sheep
	Beach associated species: western snowy plover
	Species recovery after wildfire (burned area monitoring): California spotted owl, dusky footed woodrat, and *Sidalcea hickmanii* ssp. *parishii*
	Upland plant species: *Carex obispoensis*, *Chorogalum purpureum* var. *reductum*, *Pentachaeta exilis* ssp. *aeolica*, *Sanicula maritima*, *Sidalcea hickmanii* ssp. *hickmanii*, *Sidalcea hickmanii* ssp. *parishii*, and *Thermopsis macrophylla*

Strategy	Specific Species
Habitat Protection	**Proposed project planning (e.g. reduce type conversion, minimize additional developments, timing of projects to avoid critical life stages):** All species of concern benefit from sound project planning prescribed fire or vegetation treatment southern steelhead, Pacific lamprey and other native fishes, arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, two-striped garter snake, American dipper, California spotted owl, calliope hummingbird, long-eared owl, purple martin, and southwestern willow flycatcher
	Coordination with other agencies: southern steelhead, California condor, California spotted owl, mountain lion, and Nelson's bighorn sheep
	Habitat acquisition: California condor, California spotted owl, southwestern willow flycatcher, mountain lion, and riparian dependent species
	Restricted human access during critical life stages (barriers, gates, re-routes, etc. where appropriate): arroyo toad, California red-legged frog, California condor, and western snowy plover
	Prevent the spread of invasive nonnative species (plant and animal): riparian dependent species
	Fire prevention and suppression: California spotted owl, MacGillivray's warbler, mountain lion, and riparian dependent species
	Upland plants: *Sidalcea hickmanii* ssp. *parishii* and *Thermopsis macrophylla*

WL 2 - Wildlife, Fish and Plant Habitat Management

WL 2 - Wildlife, Fish, and Plant Habitat Management

Maintain and improve habitat for fish, wildlife, and plants, including those with the following designations: game species, harvest species, management indicator species, and watch list species.

- Manage State of California designated Wild Trout Streams to maintain high quality habitat for wild trout populations.
- Coordinate and form partnerships with the California Department of Fish & Game and other cooperators, such as Partners in Flight, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and Quail Unlimited to maintain and improve fish, wildlife and plant habitat.
- Monitor Management Indicator Species (MIS).
- Monitor habitat for ecological health indicators (e.g., tamarisk, aquatic macroinvertebrates, bullfrogs).
- Maintain developed wildlife water sources and other habitat improvement structures.
- Protect habitat during fire suppression activities where feasible.
- Annually treat 200-300 acres of vegetation for wildlife habitat improvement.
- Cooperate with other agencies, partners, and other national forest programs to maintain and improve landscape level habitat conditions and ecological processes over the long-term for landscape linkages, wildlife movement corridors, key deer and bighorn sheep fawning, lambing, and winter ranges, and raptor nesting sites.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 2 - Reduce the impacts from invasive species
Goal 5 - Improve watershed condition
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals.

IS 1 - Invasive and Nonnative Species Prevention and Control

Prevent the introduction of new populations, conduct early treatment of new populations, and contain and control established populations:

- Implement the Noxious Weed Management Strategy for the four southern California national forests (see Part 3, Appendix M).
- Limit ground disturbance to the minimum area necessary during project activities. Promote conditions to enhance the recovery of vegetation in project planning, design, and implementation. Use native plant materials as needed to restore disturbed sites to prevent the introduction or reintroduction of invasive nonnative species. Conduct follow-up inspections of ground disturbing activities to monitor the effectiveness of restoration efforts in reducing or preventing the introduction or re-introduction of invasive non-native plants.
- When setting priorities for treating invasive species consider the rate of spread; the likeliness of environmental harm resulting from the establishment and spread of the invasive non-native species; the geographical location within the watershed; and the sensitivity of the location, especially invasions, occurring within occupied or potential habitat for threatened, endangered or proposed species or within special management areas, such as Research Natural Areas, Special Interest Areas, and wildernesses; and the probability that the treatment(s) will be successful.
- Prevent the introduction of invasive species and coordinate the treatment of invasive species across jurisdictional boundaries. Coordinate internally, as well as with local, state and federal agencies and permittees to prevent future introductions of invasive species through stocking, recreation use, special-use authorizations and all other national forest management and emergency activities or decisions that could promote additional invasions. Emphasize using weed management areas to consolidate and coordinate weed prevention and treatment efforts across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Routinely monitor noxious weed control projects to determine success and to evaluate the need for follow-up treatments or different control measures. Monitor known infestations as appropriate in order to determine changes in density and rate of spread.
- Treatments may include pesticide application if approved through environmental analysis.
- Facilitate research opportunities for invasive nonnative species management on National Forest System lands.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 2 - Reduce the impacts from invasive species, objective 1.

FH 1 - Vegetation Restoration

Restore vegetation through reforestation or other appropriate methods after stand replacing fires, drought, or other events or activities that degrade or cause a loss of plant communities. Where needed implement reforestation using native tree species grown from local seed sources. In such plantings consider long-term sustainability of the forest vegetation by taking into account factors, such as fire regime and regional climate. Consider small nursery operations to facilitate reforestation and to improve restoration success where direct seeding is ineffective. Use noxious-weed-free seed in all plantings.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 5 - Improve watershed condition, objective 3.

FH 3 - Restoration of Forest Health

Protect natural resource values at risk from wildland fire loss that are outside the desired range of variability, or where needed for wildlife habitat improvement:

- Implement vegetation management activities to reduce tree densities and fuel loading in yellow pine and mixed conifer forests to levels similar to those that characterized forests of the pre-suppression and early suppression eras (ca. 1880-1930). Restore species composition comparable to forests of the same era with an emphasis on increasing the relative abundance of large-diameter (greater than 24 inches diameter breast height), shade-intolerant conifer species.
- Implement vegetation treatments that improve the health of Coulter pine forests and woodlands growing in chaparral. Focus treatments on stands greater than 35 years, except where it is necessary to protect life and property. In the latter case, treatments may occur in stands greater than 20 years so long as seed (cone) banks are adequate to perpetuate the stands.
- Remove ladder fuels and forest floor fuel accumulations to protect stands of bigcone Douglas-fir from stand replacing crown fires. Reduce fuel loading in chaparral adjacent to fir stands so that future wildland fires are less likely to initiate crown fires from surrounding shrublands.
- Treat fuel loading in montane chaparral to reduce the likelihood that fires originating in this type will generate crown fires in adjacent forested stands.
- Manage chaparral in selected locations to protect the life and property of human inhabitants (e.g., the urban interface), to improve wildlife forage, and to protect watersheds from the adverse impacts of large, destructive, high intensity fires. In selected watersheds, manage for even-aged patch sizes of less than 5,000 acres.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 1- Reduce the risk from catastrophic wildland fire, objective 1.

FH 4 - Insect and Disease Management

Protect natural resource values at risk due to insect or disease loss at levels outside of the desired range of variability or where needed to improve habitat:

- Thin conifer stands to prevent water stress and damage by bark beetles.
- Report unusual mortality of vegetation promptly to the staff responsible for forest health protection. Forest health protection investigates detection reports and coordinates funding requests from the national forest for pest suppression and prevention projects.
- Consider desired pest management suppression projects when economically viable, such as suppression of dwarf mistletoe in high value trees at developed recreation sites.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 1- Reduce the risk from catastrophic wildland fire, objective 1.

Air 1 - Minimize Smoke and Dust

Control and reduce smoke and fugitive dust to protect human health, improve safety and/or reduce or eliminate environmental impacts.

- Incorporate visibility requirements into project plans.
- Use emission reduction techniques (ERT).

Air 2 - Forest Air Quality Emissions

Maintain and update the inventory for wildland fire emissions and other forest resource management emissions within the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The State Implementation Plan inventories establish levels of air pollution that meet the long-term federal air quality goals for bringing the non-attainment areas to attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

- Describe the magnitude and timing of prescribed and wildland fire emissions in each Air Pollution Control District.

WAT 1 - Watershed Function

Protect, maintain and restore natural watershed functions including slope processes, surface water and groundwater flow and retention, and riparian area sustainability:

- Assess the impacts of existing or proposed groundwater extraction and tunneling projects and proposals in order to assure that developments will not adversely affect aquatic, riparian or upland ecosystems.
- Restore, maintain and improve watershed conditions. Assure that approved and funded rehabilitation and emergency watershed treatments are implemented in an effective and timely manner.
- Maintain or restore soil properties and productivity to ensure ecosystem health (soil microbiota and vegetation growth), soil hydrologic function, and biological buffering capacity.
- Manage Riparian Conservation Areas (RCA) to maintain or improve conditions for riparian dependent resources. Riparian Conservation Areas include aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and lands adjacent to perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral streams, as well as around meadows, lakes, ponds, wetlands, vernal pools, seeps, and springs and other water bodies. Riparian dependent resources are those natural resources that owe their existence to the presence of surface or groundwater, such as fish, amphibians, reptiles, fairy shrimp, aquatic invertebrates, plants, birds, mammals, soil and water quality.
- Achieve and maintain natural stream channel conductivity, connectivity and function.
- Assess and manage geologic resources and hazards to integrate earth science principles and relationships into ecosystem management, reduce risks to people and resources, and interpret and protect unique values.
- Identify, prioritize based on risk, and mitigate impacts of abandoned and inactive landfills on water, soil and other resources. Stabilize and, where necessary, reclaim abandoned and inactive landfills to maintain proper watershed function, public safety and resource benefit.
- Inventory, analyze and prioritize abandoned mines to identify chemical and physical hazards, historic significance, and biological resources prior to reclamation. Mitigate safety hazards and adverse environmental impacts, conduct reclamation as needed, and assure that water quality standards are met.
- Maintain watershed integrity by replacing or disposing of displaced soil and rock debris in approved placement sites.
- Develop direction and policy (southern California, national forest, or place-wide as appropriate) for protecting, collecting, curating, and distributing paleontologic resources.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 5 - Improve watershed condition, objectives 1, 2, and 3.

WAT 2 - Water Management

Manage groundwater and surface water to maintain or improve water quantity and quality in ways that minimize adverse effects:

- Assess impacts of existing and proposed groundwater extractions and tunneling projects and proposals to assure that developments will not adversely affect aquatic, riparian or upland ecosystems and other uses, resources or rights (e.g., tribal water rights).
- Promote water conservation at all national forest administrative and authorized facilities. Protect and improve water quality by implementing best management practices and other project-specific water quality protection measures for all national forest and authorized activities. When reviewing non-forest water-related projects that may affect national forest resources, include appropriate conservation and water quality mitigation measures in the review response.
- Conserve and protect high-quality water sources in quantities adequate to meet national forest needs.
- Take corrective actions to eliminate the conditions leading to State listing of 303(d) impaired waters on National Forest System land. For those waters that are both on and off National Forest System land, ensure that Forest Service management does not contribute to listed water quality degradation.
- Actively pursue water rights and water allocation processes to secure instream flows and groundwater resources for current and future needs sufficient to sustain native riparian dependent resources and other national forest resources and uses.
- Identify the need for and encourage the establishment of water releases which mimic nature flow patterns, for current and future use, to maintain instream flow needs including channel maintenance, and to protect and eliminate impacts on riparian dependent resources.
- Participate in all Federal Energy Regulatory Commission licensing and re-licensing efforts on National Forest System land to ensure sufficient consideration and protection is provided for riparian dependent resources. Incorporate instream flow, riparian, and other natural resource management requirements into 4(e) license conditions.
- Monitor water development projects to ensure that instream flows are meeting riparian dependent resource needs.
- To maintain or improve habitat containing threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species, coordinate activities with CDF&G, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS, State Water Resource Control Board and other appropriate agencies involved in recommending instream flow and surface water requirements for waterways.
- Coordinate with federal, tribal, state and local governments and private entities to secure the instream flow needed to maintain, recover, and restore riparian dependent resources, channel conditions and aquatic habitat.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 5 - Improve watershed condition, objective 1

WAT 3 - Hazardous Materials

Manage known hazardous materials risks:

- Comply with all federal and state of California hazardous materials/waste requirements.
- Comply with federal and state of California requirements for emergency spill response on spills that affect National Forest System lands.

Link 1 - Habitat Linkage Planning

Identify linkages to surrounding habitat reserves and other natural areas for maintenance of biodiversity. Collaborate with local government, developers, and other entities to complement adjacent federal and non-federal land use zones and associated design criteria:

- Participate in regional planning efforts to identify linkages to surrounding habitat reserves and other natural areas for maintenance of biodiversity.
- Work with land conservancies, local government and others to secure long-term habitat linkages.
- Manage national forest uses and activities to be compatible with maintenance of habitat linkages.
- Actively participate with local government, developers, and other entities to protect national forest values at intermix and interface zones.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objective 3.

SD 1 - Wilderness

Protect and manage wilderness to improve the capability to sustain a desired range of benefits and values, and so that changes in ecosystems are primarily a consequence of natural forces. Protect and manage areas recommended for wilderness designation to maintain their wilderness values:

- Within the life of the forest plan manage all wilderness areas to standard, including areas designated as new wildernessess when they are established.
- Upon designation of new wilderness areas and wilderness additions, implement legislative direction as specified by law.
- Ensure that historic, current and future issues and management needs, including adequate biophysical and social monitoring, are addressed in all wilderness planning. Identify all use that results in adverse impacts and develop measures to alleviate those impacts to an appropriate level using current processes, such as limits of acceptable change.
- Prescribed fire may be used in wilderness to retain wilderness values and meet wilderness fire management objectives or where community protection needs exist due to development on private lands near the wilderness.
- Emphasize Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics in all wilderness wildand fire responses (see Appendix B in Part 3). All wildland fire suppression strategies (control, contain and confine) may be utilized in the 10 wilderness areas and in any subsequent wilderness additions within the Los Padres National Forest.
- Wilderness resource advisors will be assigned as necessary to all wilderness fires.
- Due to the large size and remote locations of wilderness areas on the Los Padres National Forest, helispots may be maintained for non-emergency T&E species recovery efforts.
- Implement "minimum tool" requirements as necessary to accomplish management activities. A minimum tool is defined as "a tool or method that should be used to complete the project that results in the least impact to the wilderness values or physical resource."
- When new wilderness is recommended, include legislative wording that identifies "where a wilderness area is adjacent to or is in close proximity to inhabited areas, the Secretary may take appropriate measures to control or prevent wildland fire through federal, state, and/or local agencies and jurisdictions."

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objective 3.

SD 2 - Wild and Scenic Rivers

Manage designated wild and scenic river segments to perpetuate their free-flowing condition and designated classifications, and to protect and enhance their outstandingly remarkable values and water quality.

- For those designated wild and scenic rivers, a Comprehensive River Management Plan and boundary declaration will be prepared and implemented as specified in the designation language.

Manage recommended wild and scenic river segments to perpetuate their free-flowing condition and proposed classifications, and to protect and enhance their outstandingly remarkable values and water quality through the suitability study period, and until designated or released from consideration:

- For those recommended wild and scenic river segments, interim protection measures will be applied to the bed, bank, and one-quarter mile on either side of the ordinary high-water mark.

SD 3 - Research Natural Areas

Protect and manage research natural areas to maintain unmodified conditions and natural processes. Identify a sufficient range of opportunities to meet research needs. Compatible uses and management activities are allowed:

- Submit Establishment Reports for designated research natural areas to the Regional Forester.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objective 3.

SD 4 - Special Interest Areas

Protect and manage special interest areas (SIAs) for the values and features for which they are established. Uses and management activities, including access, that complement or are subordinate to the values and features are allowed:

- Update current management plans, implementation schedules and monitoring protocols for existing designated SIAs. Prepare management plans, implementation schedules and monitoring protocols for newly designated SIAs and for existing SIAs without this documentation.

Her 1 - Heritage Resource Protection

Protect heritage resources for cultural and scientific value and public benefit:

- Within this planning cycle document all known significant cultural properties to identify any activity that does or has the potential to adversely affect, or does not complement the site. Develop measures to mitigate the adverse effects or impacts.
- Use partnerships to implement site management plans for heritage resource sites, focusing on those sites with recognized significance or are at risk from public or land use effects.
- Evaluate historic sites for appropriate management. Develop site management plans for noteworthy heritage resources wherever they occur.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objectives 1 and 2.

Her 2 - Public Involvement Program

Provide public involvement programs for the public to partner in the stewardship of heritage resource sites:

- Develop public involvement programs to foster partnership in heritage resource stewardship to aid in identifying and evaluating heritage sites.
- Work with the local communities to understand, document, preserve, and interpret the national forest history for the public. Develop opportunities for partnerships with the public to maintain and reuse historic heritage resources.

Her 3 - Forest-wide Heritage Inventory

Increase knowledge of the occurrence, distribution, and diversity of site types for heritage resources on the national forest:

- Increase the heritage resource database through the survey of nonproject acreage. Prioritize those places where the percentage of uninventoried high heritage resource sensitivity acres exceeds 50 percent of the total high heritage resource sensitivity for the place.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objectives 1 and 3.

Her 4 - Heritage Research

Document and strengthen the linkages between heritage research and ecosystem management and research; and integrate knowledge and appreciation of past cultures into today's diversity:

- Identify research needs and opportunities for research programs for qualified persons or groups by developing cooperative agreements.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objective 3.

REC 1 - Recreation Opportunity

Manage national forest land to achieve recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) classes.

REC 2 - Sustainable Use and Environmental Design

Analyze, stabilize and restore areas where visitor use is negatively affecting recreation opportunities, public safety and environmental resources. Manage visitor use within the limits of identified capacities:

- Implement recreation capacity control measures in specific high-use areas as resource impacts become a concern.
- Conduct threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species occupancy surveys within potential threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species recreation conflict areas.
- Implement Adaptive Mitigation for Recreation Uses (Appendix D) in existing and new recreation sites and uses whenever a conflict between uses or sensitive resources is detected.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 3 - Provide outdoor recreation opportunities, objective 1.

REC 3 - Recreation Participation

Offer a wide range of high quality, environmentally sustainable developed and dispersed recreation opportunities to a rapidly growing and culturally diverse visitor population, with minimal visitor conflicts and effects to other resources:

- Develop new, environmentally sustainable recreation opportunities, areas, and infrastructure to relieve concentrated demand within existing high-use areas and to accommodate future growth and new uses elsewhere.
- Improve, remove or replace aging developed recreation infrastructure to better meet current needs and future demand. As a priority, compensate for opportunities lost due to closures.
- Evaluate existing and potential dispersed use, including recreational target shooting, waterplay, snowplay and camping opportunities. Identify areas where that use is inconsistent with resource protection and public safety, and mitigate or eliminate problems over time.
- Implement adaptive management processes at recreation facilities to proactively respond to persons with disabilities, contemporary urban visitors, aging populations, diverse ethnic groups, and day-use emphasis (see Appendix C, Monitoring Requirements).
- Maintain partnerships with businesses who operate and maintain existing recreation facilities under the concession program to meet the needs of visitor demands.
- In designated areas where target shooting is allowed, emphasize management of target shooting activity through development of appropriate range facilities and on-site management presence, using special-use authorizations or other partnership opportunities.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 3 - Provide outdoor recreation opportunities, objective 1.

REC 4 - Conservation Education

Develop interpretive materials so that visitors have a greater understanding about the significance and importance of forest ecosystems, heritage resources, and the interrelationship between people and the natural environment:

- The Forest Service plays a leadership role in developing strong, well-supported conservation education partnerships with non-profit organizations, volunteer groups, communities, governments, organization camps and private entities, while emphasizing and enhancing the capability of field program and project delivery, especially to underserved populations. Coordination between national forests is promoted for maximum results and cost efficiencies of programs, projects and visitor centers.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objective 3.

REC 5 - Recreation Special Use Authorizations

- Manage recreation residences as a valid use of National Forest System land.
- Complete Recreation Residence Consistency Review and Continuance Determinations including Recreation Residence Compliance Inspections.
- Manage all recreation special-uses in compliance with law, regulation and policy.
- Administer all recreation special-use authorizations to standard.
- Establish authorization holder responsibility for public education about threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species approved by the Forest Service for recreation special-use events within all threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitats.

LM 1 - Landscape Aesthetics

Manage landscapes and built elements to achieve scenic integrity objectives:

- Use best environmental design practices to harmonize changes in the landscape and advance environmentally sustainable design solutions.

LM 2 - Landscape Restoration

Restore landscapes to reduce visual effects of nonconforming features:

- Prioritize landscape restoration activities in key places. Integrate restoration activities with other resource restoration.

LM 3 - Landscape Character

Maintain the character of key places to preserve their intact nature and valued attributes:

- Maintain the integrity of the expansive, unencumbered landscapes and traditional cultural features that provide the distinctive character of the place.
- Promote the planning and improvement of infrastructure along scenic travel routes.

Law 1 - Enforcement and Investigations

Provide law enforcement (LE) services for safety and resource protection. Opportunities to supplement LE resources include but are not limited to:

- Supplement staff with law enforcement officers (LEOs) from other agencies, and by recruiting and deploying additional reserve law enforcement officers. Pursue alternate funding sources to supplement LE programs, such as the State of California Off-Highway Vehicle grant program.
- Utilize cooperative agreements with local law enforcement agencies. Supplement field personnel and provide additional law enforcement support primarily on high use weekends or holidays when visitor use is highest, or as a response unit in locations where LEO presence is limited.
- Improve LE services by recruiting and employing Spanish speaking officers whenever possible. Provide training for officers that do not currently speak Spanish. Adapt to changes in interpreter/interpretation needs with the inclusion of people that are conversant in any of the other languages that are, or will become, predominant in the future by recruiting these people into the ride-along-program with the LEO cadre.
- As soon as practical develop, update, or revise Forest Orders to define the long-term protection that apply to national forest needs.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 3 - Provide outdoor recreation opportunities, objectives 1 and 3.

Fac 1 - Facilities Maintenance Backlog

The backlog of facilities that do not meet the desired condition or complement the recreation setting is reduced by replacing outdated substandard facilities with safe, efficient, durable, environmentally sensitive infrastructure:

- Identify and evaluate applicable property or buildings of potential historic value in support of the Facility Master Plan. Remove facilities no longer needed or abandoned, and restore sites to natural conditions.
- Reduce the backlog with priority for health and safety and accessibility compliance.
- Increase the operating efficiency of existing buildings.
- Upgrade site utilities for efficient operation. Remodel or construct new buildings to conform to approved Facilities Master Plan.

Trans 1 - Transportation System

Plan, design, construct, and maintain the National Forest System roads and trails to meet forest plan objectives, to promote sustainable resource conditions, and to safely accommodate anticipated levels and types of use:

- Implement landscape-scale transportation system analysis on a priority basis. Coordinate with state, county, local and regional government entities, municipalities, tribal governments, other agencies, and the public.
- Add unclassified roads to the National Forest System of roads when site-specific road analysis determines there is a public need for the road.
- Enhance user safety and offer adequate parking at popular destinations on high traffic passenger car roads, while also minimizing adverse resource effects.
- Using priorities identified in the roads analysis process reduce the road maintenance backlog to provide safe, efficient routes for recreationists and through-traveling public, and to safely accommodate fire protection equipment and other high clearance vehicles.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 3 - Provide outdoor recreation opportunities, objective 1, and
Goal 1- Reduce the risk from catastrophic wildland fire, objective 2.

Trans 2 - Unnecessary Roads

Reduce the number of unnecessary or redundant unclassified roads and restore landscapes:

- Decommission roads determined to be unnecessary for conversion to either the road or trail system through site-specific road analysis.
- Establish level of restoration through project planning.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 3 - Provide outdoor recreation opportunities, objective 2.

Trans 3 - Improve Trails

Develop an interconnected, shared-use trail network and support facilities that complement local, regional and national trails and open space, and that also enhance day-use opportunities and access for the general public:

- Construct and maintain the trail network to levels commensurate with area objectives, sustainable resource conditions, and the type and level of use.
- Consider conversion of suitable unclassified roads and trails, and other roads that meet the need for trail-based recreation.
- Consider incorporation of unclassified trails to the National Forest System of trails when site-specific trail analysis determines there is a public need for the trail and it is consistent with other ecosystem needs.
- Maintain and/or develop access points and connecting trails linked to surrounding communities and create opportunities for non-motorized trips of short duration.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 3 - Provide outdoor recreation opportunities, objective 1.

Trans 4 - Off-Highway Vehicle Opportunities

Improve off-highway vehicle opportunities and facilities for highway licensed and non-highway licensed vehicles where compatible with other ecosystem objectives:

- Improve off-highway vehicle opportunities in the easy, more, and most difficult route categories.
- In conjunction with the designation of low maintenance standard roads develop motorized trails that address the needs of off-highway vehicle enthusiasts.
- Submit candidate roads and trails to the State of California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Division for designation as the California Back Country Discovery Trail as opportunities to afford this experience are identified.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 3 - Provide outdoor recreation opportunities, objective 2.

SFP 1 - Offer Special Forest Products

Deliver miscellaneous forest products at appropriate levels to sustain resource values. Manage special forest products to reduce or eliminate impacts to other resources in a manner consistent with adjacent Districts:

- Record forest product removal permits to analyze magnitude of the removals.
- Offer forest products, including fuelwood, biomass, Christmas trees, and other plant materials, to manage vegetation to achieve desired conditions.

Lands 1 - Land Ownership Adjustment

Consolidate National Forest System land base to improve management effectiveness, enhance public benefits, improve habitat condition and linkages, and support resource management:

- Acquire lands or interest in lands through purchase, donation, exchange, rights-of-way acquisition, transfer, interchange, and boundary adjustment to address the issues associated with complex ownership patterns, such as urban interface fire protection and occupancy trespass.
- Acquire lands or rights-of-way for road and trail access to support appropriate national forest activities and public needs.
- Work with land conservancies, local government, and others to secure long-term habitat linkages.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objective 3.

Lands 2 - Non-Recreation Special Use Authorizations

Administer special-use authorizations (SUAs) to standard:

- Upon termination of SUA restore areas to a specified condition.
- Administer existing SUAs in threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitats to ensure they avoid or minimize impacts to threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species and their habitats.
- Work with special-use authorization holders to better administer National Forest System land and reduce administrative cost.
- Maximize opportunities to co-locate facilities and minimize encumbrance of National Forest System land.
- Phase out groundwater and surface water diversion authorizations that adversely affect threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species.
- Work to amend existing authorizations as necessary to provide suitable water flows for threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species in threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitat that has been degraded by water withdrawals.
- Where overhead transmission lines occur in high-use California condor flyways work with utility companies or authorization holders to install high-visibility or avoidance devices and raptor guards on poles and other structures potentially used as perching sites by California condors.
- For special-use authorization holders operating within threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species key and occupied habitats, develop and provide information and education (e.g., workshops, annual meetings) on ways to avoid and minimize effects of their activities on occupied threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitat.
- Use signing, barriers, or other suitable measures to protect threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species, and key and occupied habitats within special-use authorization areas.
- Utilize existing designated communication sites as noted in Appendix C.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objective 3, and
Goal 4 - Help meet energy resource needs, objective 1.

Lands 3 - Boundary Management

Reduce backlog of landline posting and incidents of trespass:

- Survey and post key boundaries to eliminate occupancy trespass and prevent unauthorized occupancy.

Lands 4 - Mineral Withdrawals

Monitor and manage withdrawal status to document condition of lands that could affect other actions (e.g., watershed protection, mining):

- Review existing withdrawals to determine if continuation is consistent with the statutory objectives of the programs for which the lands were dedicated.
- Recommend for withdrawal from mineral entry threatened, endangered, and proposed species key habitats in areas of mineral potential where habitat is not protected by any other means and would benefit by withdrawal.

ME 1 - Minerals Management

Administer minerals and energy resources to afford commodities for current and future generations commensurate with the need to sustain the long-term health and biological diversity of ecosystems:

- Limit withdrawals from mineral entry in order to maintain opportunities to access mineral and energy resources.
- Assure long-term access and availability for leasing of oil and gas resources from environmentally suitable lands, for regional, statewide and national energy needs.
- Use terms and conditions of the operating plan to offset the effects of mining consistent with conservation of habitats for threatened, endangered, or sensitive species.
- Eliminate unapproved and noncompliant minerals operations.
- Facilitate environmentally and culturally sensitive exploration, development, and production of mineral and energy resources on National Forest System lands open to these activities or on withdrawn lands consistent with valid existing rights, and integrate these activities with the planning and management of other resources.
- Work with California Department of Fish and Game to prohibit suction dredging in areas where needed to protect threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species.
- Work with the Bureau of Land Management to formalize the status of abandoned and idle wells and ancillary facilities and the restoration of the land to natural conditions.
- For approved mining operations within occupied threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitat, riparian habitat, or other areas with species of concern monitor mining operations as needed to ensure compliance with plans of operation.

ME 2 - Biomass Utilization

Seek opportunities to use by-products from forest thinning and mortality removal for production of energy.

LG 1 - Livestock Grazing

Livestock grazing areas are maintained and remain sustainable and suitable over the long-term.

- Administer each livestock grazing area to standard within a three-year period. Administering a livestock grazing area to standard includes: ensuring compliance with terms and conditions of the permit, allotment management plans, annual operating instructions, biological opinions, and forest plan standards. Permittees monitor for compliance with the permit standards and guides. The permittee submits monitoring and allotment management reports to the national forest officer in charge when requested (FSH 2209.13, 15.14b).
- Review and consider the Region 5 Permit Suspension and Cancellation Guidelines for non-compliance with permit terms and conditions (FSH 2209.13, 16.2, 16.21d).
- Plan and implement range structural improvements, such as but not limited to, water developments, and barbed wire fences that are maintained in a serviceable condition. Structural improvements will incorporate wildlife protection measures when allotment management plans are revised or new improvements are planned.
- Utilize suitable vacant allotments, other livestock grazing areas, and transitory range for available forage or utilize these areas to move active livestock grazing areas toward meeting resource and rangeland management desired conditions.
- Review and apply the appropriate rangeland management practices necessary to meet or move toward desired conditions. Rangeland management practices include, but are not limited to: regulation of livestock numbers and distribution; season and degree of use; salt placement locations; and placement of structural improvements. Fencing should be considered as a last resort after other management practices have been determined to be ineffective. Water developments should be considered outside of riparian areas and where such developments would lessen the degree of riparian use.

Linked to National Strategic Plan

Goal 5 - Improve watershed condition, objectives 1, 2, and 3, and

Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objectives 1 and 3.

LG 2 - Rangeland Health

Rangelands are healthy and sustainable over the long-term. Rangelands are meeting or moving toward forest plan, ecosystem, and site-specific desired conditions.

- Prioritize and perform an interdisciplinary team rangeland assessment (e.g., long-term condition and trend transects and proper functioning condition assessments (PFC)) to determine if key areas are meeting or moving toward desired conditions and resource objectives. Adjust livestock management as necessary.
- Evaluate ecosystem health. Indicators used in the evaluation include, but are not limited to: measures of riparian structure and function; the amount and distribution of noxious weeds and invasive nonnative species; soil health; threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitat; rare plant species vigor; plant community composition and structure; sensitive heritage resources; and water quality. Adjust livestock management as necessary.
- Review and incorporate the Forest Plan Noxious Weed Management Strategy.
- Implement Best Management Practices for Water Quality.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 2 - Reduce the impacts from invasive species, objective 1,
Goal 5 - Improve watershed condition, objectives 1, 2, and 3, and
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objectives 1 and 3.

LG 3 - Wildhorse Territories

Wildhorse populations and distribution are managed as specified in the approved Territory Management Plan. The Wildhorse territory remains suitable and sustainable over the long-term.

- Periodically review the approved Territory Management Plan and the forest plan to assess whether desired conditions are being met or being moving towards. If necessary amend the Wildhorse Territory Management Plan to meet the forest plan desired conditions.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 5 - Improve watershed condition, objectives 1, 2, and 3, and
Goal 6 - Mission related work in addition to that which supports the agency goals, objectives 1 and 3.

Fire 1 - Fire Prevention

Reduce the number of human-caused wildland fires and associated human and environmental impacts. Focus fire prevention programs on the urban interface, threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, and sensitive species habitat, vegetative areas threatened with type conversion, and areas of major recreation use:

- Consider application of fire retardant along roads and adjacent to areas of high recreation use where human-caused wildland fires are frequent.
- Consider full or partial national forest closures when there is a lack of firefighter capability, or extreme weather and fuel conditions that would result in unstoppable wildland fires.
- Continue with environmental and fire prevention education in local schools.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 1- Reduce the risk from catastrophic wildland fire, objective 2.

Fire 2 - Direct Community Protection

Reduce the number of high risk/high value, and high and moderate risk acres using both mechanical treatments and prescribed fire. Identify and schedule for treatment in the high risk and high value acres near communities, including the installation of Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) Defense and Threat Zone vegetation treatments. Highest priority should be given to those areas with substantial drought and insect-killed vegetation that present a significant threat to life and property in entire communities:

- Promote removal of tree mortality adjacent to structures as the first step in reducing threats to human life and investments.
- When National Forest System lands are managed for direct community protection, consider the use of Memorandums of Understanding with Fire Safe Councils as a means of allowing residents to meet State fire law or county brush clearance ordinances on a combination of private and public lands.
- Herbicides may be used in the WUI Defense Zone on National Forest System land to avoid expensive treatments of resprouting chaparral species.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 1- Reduce the risk from catastrophic wildland fire, objectives 1 and 3.

Fire 4 - Firefighter and Public Safety

Firefighter and public safety is the first priority in every fire management activity. Integrate all fire management activities with those of other government agencies and conduct fire management activities in a cost effective manner:

- Work with cooperators to improve residential structure hazard inspections for defensible space.
- In concert with other agencies and Fire Safe Councils develop evacuation and structure protection plans that will enhance both firefighter and public safety.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 1- Reduce the risk from catastrophic wildland fire, objective 2.

Fire 5 - Fuelbreaks and Indirect Community Protection

Maintain the existing system of roadside fuelbreaks and fuelbreaks along watershed boundaries to minimize fire size and the number of communities threatened by both fires and floods. When feasible construct new fuelbreaks on land outside of wilderness or other special designations.

- Consider an opportunistic approach to fuels management. Take advantage of wildland fire occurrence and wherever possible connect wildland fires to forest health and wildlife habitat improvement projects, as well as fuelbreaks to maintain multiple lines of community defense and to minimize future wildland fire patch size.
- Pre-plan fire suppression activities to avoid or minimize the use of locations of known invasive nonnative species.

Linked to National Strategic Plan
Goal 1- Reduce the risk from catastrophic wildland fire, objectives 1 and 3.

Appendix C. Maps

Los Padres Northern Division

Land Use Zones
Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Scenic Integrity Objectives
Inventoried Roadless Areas
Places

Los Padres Central

Land Use Zones
Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Scenic Integrity Objectives
Inventoried Roadless Areas
Places

Los Padres South

Land Use Zones
Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Scenic Integrity Objectives
Inventoried Roadless Areas
Places