
File Code: 2350
Date: February 9, 2016

Dear Interested Party,

The San Bernardino National Forest is pleased to announce completion of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Rattlesnake Mountain OHV Trails project, and draft Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (DN/FONSI). The purpose of this letter is to provide notification of the opportunity to file a formal objection pursuant to 36 CFR 218 Subpart A and B.

The selected alternative for this project (Alternative 3) would designate 8.1 miles of OHV trail and road access, designate an additional 4.9 miles of Coxey Road (3N14) as OHV mixed use, and close/restore approximately 25 miles of unauthorized routes within the approximately 8,000 acre project area. A project-specific Forest Plan amendment to change current zoning along some of the proposed trails from non-motorized to motorized is also included. The project is located in San Bernardino County, California, on the Mountaintop Ranger District of the SBNF, between the Town of Apple Valley and the community of Fawnskin. The EA and draft DN /FONSI are available for review by appointment at the Big Bear Ranger Station, 41374 North Shore Drive, Fawnskin, CA 92333; or on-line at:
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=43331> .

Public Involvement Process

A press release was sent out on February 27, 2015 to inform the media and public about the project proposal, and in particular, the open house public meeting to be held Saturday March 7, 2015. The proposal was provided to the public and other agencies for comment during scoping, which began March 6, 2015. Scoping materials were provided via mail, email, and the internet. A legal notice of scoping and opportunity for public comment was published in the San Bernardino County Sun (the SBNF newspaper of record) on March 18, 2015. The scoping period ended 30 days after the publication of the legal notice, on April 17, 2015. A total of 134 written or electronic comment letters were received. The comments and their disposition are summarized in the EA.

The draft EA was released for a 30-day public review and comment period beginning on November 17, 2015 and ending December 16, 2105. The legal notice of opportunity to comment was published in the San Bernardino County Sun on November 16, 2015. Twenty one comment letters were received. The comments and responses are recorded in Appendix B of the EA.

How to File an Objection

Objections will only be accepted from those who submitted project-specific written comments during scoping or other designated comment period. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted comments unless based on new information arising after the designated comment period(s).



Objections must be submitted within 45 days following the publication of the legal notice in the San Bernardino County Sun, the newspaper of record. The date of this legal notice is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframes provided by any other source. It is the objector's responsibility to ensure evidence of timely receipt (36 CFR 218.9).

The publication date for the objection notice is February 10, 2016. Because the end of the 45-day objection period falls on a Saturday, objections will be accepted through Monday, March 28th, 2016 11:59 pm Pacific Standard Time.

Objections must be submitted to the Reviewing Officer: Randy Moore, Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service; Attn: Rattlesnake Mountain; 1323 Club Drive, Vallejo, CA 94592. Ph. (707) 562-8737. Objections may be submitted via mail, FAX (707-562-9229), or delivered during business hours (M-F 8:00am to 4:00pm). Electronic objections, in common (.doc, .pdf, .rtf, .txt) formats, may be submitted to: objections-pacificsouthwest-regional-office@fs.fed.us with Subject: Rattlesnake Mountain.

Objections must include (36 CFR 218.8(d)): 1) name, address and telephone; 2) signature or other verification of authorship; 3) identify a single lead objector when applicable; 4) project name, Responsible Official name and title, and name of affected National Forest(s) and/or Ranger District(s); 5) reasons for, and suggested remedies to resolve, your objections; and, 6) description of the connection between your objections and your prior comments. Incorporate documents by reference only as provided for at 36 CFR 218.8(b).

Timing of Project Decision and Implementation

When the objection filing period has ended and responses have been made to any objections by the Reviewing Officer, the Responsible Official may make a final decision on the project. The Reviewing Officer shall issue a written response to any Objectors within 45-days following the end of this objection filing period (36 CFR 218.26(b)). If no legitimate objections are filed, a decision can be made on the 5th business day following the close of the filing period (36 CFR 218.12). Implementation may begin immediately after the decision is made.

For additional information or to make an appointment to view documents, email Scott Eliason at the Mountaintop Ranger District (seliason@fs.fed.us); or call (909) 382-2832.

Sincerely,

John D. Exline (for)

JODY NOIRON
Forest Supervisor