



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Los Padres  
National Forest

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Dear Friend of Southern California's National Forests:

You are invited to participate in the upcoming forest plan update process. During 2001, the four national forests located in southern California (the Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres and San Bernardino National Forests) will begin the process of updating their respective forest plans. These plans are the foundation for the management of our national forests. By law, forest plans must be updated every 10-15 years.

Forest plan updates address all aspects of forest management, including watershed protection, ecological diversity, wildland recreation opportunities, wilderness and special uses. One of our main goals is to manage the landscape in a way that ensures the protection of threatened and endangered (T&E) species and their habitats. We have learned a great deal about T&E species needs since our forest plans were first written in the 1980's. Based on new information and changing public needs, it is timely and important to update our forest plans.

The process of updating the forest plans begins with this letter and an initial series of public workshops in February and March, 2001. A Notice of Intent (NOI) will be published in the Federal Register this summer to officially begin the formal environmental analysis. A draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is scheduled for release during the summer 2002. A final EIS is scheduled for release during the summer 2003.

I believe it is vital that you, as someone who values the national forests in southern California, help to shape their future. The forest plan update will address issues that are of great consequence to all of us. I am asking for your participation and support during this process to:

- Identify what you value most about national forests in southern California
- Share your vision for the future of national forests in southern California
- Integrate values, vision and existing laws to describe long-term landscape goals
- Create opportunities for on-going collaborative efforts for managing national forests
- Review the draft and final Environmental Impact Statements, including their in-depth analysis of environmental effects.

To start the process, I invite you to participate in public workshops designed to encourage a collaborative approach to updating our forest plans. A schedule of these workshops is attached. I am convinced that together we can develop a plan for the common good. I encourage you to become involved and to tell us what you think. Share your comments at public meetings or in writing. Soon you will also be able to send us your comments via email from our web page (<http://www.r5.fs.fed.us/lospadres>). Please help us develop the very best plans for the national forests of southern California.

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Forest Supervisor

