



AGENDA REQUEST FORM
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF INYO

For Clerk's Use Only:
AGENDA NUMBER

- Consent Departmental Correspondence Action Public Hearing
 Scheduled Time for Closed Session Informational

FROM: Inyo County Planning Department

FOR THE BOARD MEETING OF: August 5, 2013

SUBJECT: Inyo National Forest Plan Update/Revision – Big Pine Public Meeting

RECOMMENDATION: Conduct a public meeting regarding the Inyo National Forest Plan Update/Revision and draft Topic Papers and solicit public input to focus the County's input regarding the draft Topic Papers to the Forest Service.

SUMMARY DISCUSSION: The Inyo National Forest (INF) is working on updating its Forest Plan.¹ The U.S. Forest Service completed an update to the Forest Planning Rule in 2012. The County of Inyo participated extensively in developing the rule; input from the County was incorporated into the rule, including a requirement that the Forest Service coordinate with local government.

The Inyo National Forest has been selected as one of the first of eight forests nation-wide to be an early adopter of the new Rule; three of the "early adopters" are in Forest Service Region 5 in California – the Inyo, Sequoia, and Sierra National Forests. The Plan Update will consist of various phases, beginning with an Assessment, followed by development of the Plan and associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Upon approval, the INF will monitor Plan implementation and if needed amend, update, and revise the Plan in a continuous cycle.

The INF's existing Plan was approved in 1988 and includes numerous amendments, errata, and other modifications; due to its age and format, it is anticipated that a substantial revision and reformat will be necessary. Forest Service staff expect that the updated Plan will be more policy-oriented than the existing Plan, providing broad policy guidance for management of the Forest, but less physical prescription for specific areas.

A team approach between the local and Region 5 Forest Service offices is being undertaken to provide in-house technical expertise to the local office and prepare the Plan Update/Revision. A core team in the regional office has been assembled to provide oversight, direction, and assistance for the forests in Region 5, including an economist, ecologist, social scientist, and a technical editor. A broad interdisciplinary team has been assembled in the INF office to provide local expertise.

The Plan Update is in the early assessment phase; the INF's interdisciplinary team prepared draft Topic Papers to be considered by the regional team, which is preparing the Assessment. The draft Topic Papers are currently in public review, and comments are due September 1. The regional team will then prepare a draft Assessment, for which public review is anticipated in October. The team will then incorporate public comment into a final Assessment later in the year. Following phases include evaluation of the need for

¹ Refer to <http://inyoplanning.org/InyoNationalForest.htm> for more information about the County's participation in the Plan Update/Revision, including links to the Forest Service's relevant online references.

change in 2014, development of the Plan Update and EIS later in 2014 and 2015, and final approval in 2016.

The Board of Supervisors previously identified priorities for the County in the Update, which are attached. In order to focus the County's input to the Forest Service regarding the Topic Papers, the Board is conducting public meetings in Bishop, Big Pine, and Lone Pine. The Board will utilize the public input received during these meetings when crafting its correspondence regarding the draft Topic Papers to the Forest Service.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT: Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service; Mono, Fresno, Madera, and Tuolumne counties; other interested persons and organizations.

FINANCING: General fund resources are utilized to monitor planning work in the Forest. Resources for Willdan's assistance with the effort are funded by operating transfer from the Geothermal Royalties fund.

<u>APPROVALS</u>	
COUNTY COUNSEL:	AGREEMENTS, CONTRACTS AND ORDINANCES AND CLOSED SESSION AND RELATED ITEMS <i>(Must be reviewed and approved by county counsel prior to submission to the board clerk.)</i>
AUDITOR/CONTROLLER:	ACCOUNTING/FINANCE AND RELATED ITEMS <i>(Must be reviewed and approved by the auditor-controller prior to submission to the board clerk.)</i>
PERSONNEL DIRECTOR:	PERSONNEL AND RELATED ITEMS <i>(Must be reviewed and approved by the director of personnel services prior to submission to the board clerk.)</i>

DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE:
(Not to be signed until all approvals are received)



Date: 7-26-13

Attachment: Previous Board Correspondence Regarding the County's Priorities for the Plan Update



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF INYO

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Assistant Clerk of the Board

June 19, 2012

Mr. Ed Armenta, Supervisor
Inyo National Forest
351 Pacu Lane, Suite 200
Bishop, CA 93514

Re: Inyo National Forest Plan Update/Revision

Dear Supervisor Armenta:

On behalf of the Inyo County Board of Supervisors, thank you for attending our workshop on April 17 to discuss the impending Inyo National Forest Plan Update/Revision. As you know, we are more than just a stakeholder in the planning process; we represent the people of Inyo County through a democratic process, and we attempt to balance the viewpoints of all of our constituents and sift through the vast amount of materials necessary to participate in planning for the Inyo National Forest. Below, based on our discussion and with the input of our Natural Resource Advisory Committee, are our priorities for the Update/Revision.

- Access – enhanced to accommodate vehicular use, packing, hunting, hiking, and other recreational opportunities, as well as mining and other uses of the Forest. Mitigation opportunities for potential environmental impacts resulting from increased access should be identified and implemented.
 - Roads and trails should be protected and expanded to provide access for recreation and exploration for natural resources and other uses of the Forest, including grazing, mining, and the activities of native peoples (such as gathering).
 - Roadless Areas should be identified for removal as they are no longer relevant or roadless.
 - Conflicts between biological resources and human access should be identified and planned for.
- Vibrant Economy – the Plan should contribute substantially to the local economy due to the impact of the Forest on the County's culture and fiscal health, and should not result in significant socioeconomic impacts.
 - Grazing, Mining, Renewable Energy Production, and other Uses – the Plan should support and encourage consumptive and sustainable uses of the Forest to contribute to the County's economy and culture.
 - Roads and trails should be protected and expanded to provide access for recreation and exploration for natural resources. This type of recreation is an important economic driver for the County.
 - Mitigation Bank – opportunities to shift land acquisition for mitigation of environmental impacts to restoration of degraded wilderness areas should be incorporated into the Plan to accommodate mitigation of human development elsewhere in the County.
- Local Culture – the Plan should support and enhance the culture of local communities to the extent social and cultural issues revolve around the forest.

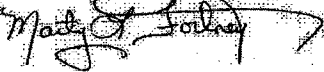
Mr. Ed Armenta, Supervisor
Inyo National Forest
June 19, 2012
Page TWO

- Public Safety – access and accommodation for public safety purposes should be of paramount concern in the Plan, including for law enforcement (such as eradicating illegal drug production), fire management and suppression, and search and rescue.
- Provide access to the Forest for gathering activities, prospecting, sightseeing, exploration, and camping.
- Provide a continuing voice to the people living around the forest through their local government representatives.

The Inyo National Forest is of vital importance to Inyo County, and we look forward to working with you and your team over the coming years to craft a locally sustainable Plan that contributes positively to our society and culture. Our General Plan Government Element provides more detailed guidance regarding the County's priorities, and we encourage you to refer to it and on the County's website at http://inyoplanning.org/general_plan/goals.htm.

If you have any questions, please contact the County's Administrative Officer, Kevin Carunchio, at (760) 878-0292 or kcarunchio@inyocounty.us. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Supervisor Marty Fortney, Chairperson
Inyo County Board of Supervisors

cc: Board of Supervisors
Kevin Carunchio, CAO
Randy Keller, County Counsel
Joshua Hart, Planning Director
Doug Wilson, Willdan
Inyo County Natural Resource Advisory Committee
Regional Council of Rural Counties
California State Association of Counties
National Association of Counties
Secretary Vilsak, USDA
Randy Moore, Pacific Southwest Regional Forester, USFS
Chief Tidwell, USFS
Susan Joyce, USFS
Sustainable Forest Action Coalition