



COUNTY OF INYO
Natural Resource Advisory Committee
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AGENDA ITEM NO.: 7

NRAC MEETING DATE: August 8, 2013

SUBJECT: Inyo National Forest Plan Update/Revision – Draft Topic Papers and Focus Papers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County is working with the Inyo National Forest (INF) on its update to the INF Plan. Topic papers were released regarding the Plan Update/Revision earlier this year, and the Natural Resource Advisory Committee (NRAC) previously provided input for the Board of Supervisors' consideration. The comment period for the Topic Papers has been extended, and additional input regarding the Topic Papers from the NRAC is being requested for the Board's consideration, as well as regarding draft Focus Papers that are being prepared by County staff.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Supervisory District: County-wide

Recommended Action: **Provide input and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the Draft Topic Papers and the Draft Focus Papers**

Project Planner: Joshua Hart, AICP, Planning Director

BACKGROUND

The INF is working on updating its Forest Plan. Draft Topic Papers for the Update/Revision were released on May 8 for public review, and the NRAC provided input at its June 6, 2013 meeting; the comment period was subsequently extended to September 1. Staff is presenting the Topic Papers to the NRAC for a second time for its recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, which is anticipated to review the documents in August. The Planning Commission (PC) reviewed the draft Topic Papers and Focus Papers and provided input at their May 22, 2013 and July 24, 2013 meeting.

The following summarizes the Planning Commission's input from the May 22 meeting:

- Payment in-lieu taxes (PILT) does not adequately offset County costs to provide services and does not address the opportunity costs of federal land management. PILT payments are subject to the legislative process, and neither payment amount nor compensation in a timely manner are assured.
- The Forest Service should coordinate with the County.

- The State Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is not disclosing when it kills fish. Destroying the fishery will destroy recreation. The amphibians are being killed by pollution from the west side of the mountains.
- The resort industry and the Fish and Game Commission need to be involved.
- There are too many meetings.
- People who have been fishing here for generations are not returning due to the State DFW's management. This is resulting in cultural-historic impacts.
- Mining and packing are being impacted.
- The County's public outreach effort should be strengthened.
- Closing roads impedes people with limited mobility and other impairments from visiting the Forest.

The following summarizes comments made by individual NRAC members at the June 6 meeting:

- The Plan will result in socioeconomic impacts and further impede mining.
- The environmental impacts of mining should be considered.
- The County should collaborate with other jurisdictions.
- Total impacts should be considered. A regional approach may be beneficial. Our communities are equal at the table.
- Endangered species protections have been applied inconsistently.
- The 1988 Plan lacked baseline data, which is still lacking.
- The Natural Range of Variability (NRV) Assessments provide baseline vegetation data. Management will not lead to a natural state. We need to point out specific references that are invalid.
- We have information overload.
- We need more public outreach
- There is a strong relationship between the people and the Forest.
- We need to analyze mitigation, which is missing from the Topic Papers.
- Dust pollution from Owens Lake has improved over the last several decades.

This input was reported to the Board of Supervisors, and in particular, direction was requested regarding strengthening the County's public outreach effort. The Board directed staff to do so by conducting evening Board meetings in various communities during strategic phases of the Forest Plan Update/Revision, and publicizing these meetings to encourage public attendance to solicit input directly to the Board. The Board also directed staff to work on Focus Papers to identify the County's issues to assist the public in concentrating its input.

ANALYSIS

The Topic Papers¹ build on the work begun with the Science Synthesis and Bioregional Assessment, and are intended to provide the basis for the Forest Plan Update/Revision Assessment (e.g., the first phase of Plan revision). The Papers comprise 15 chapters corresponding with the topics identified in the 2012 Planning Rule. The Committee may refer to previous information presented regarding the Topic Papers

¹ Refer to <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/inyo/landmanagement/planning> to review the Topic Papers.

on the County's website.² Staff requests that the NRAC review the summary of the previous input and provide any updates.

As discussed above, the Board directed staff to develop Focus Papers to assist in public understanding issues germane to the County. Staff is working on the following four Focus Papers: (1) Socioeconomics, (2) Multiple Uses, (3) Biology, and (4) Infrastructure/Services. Draft work product for the Focus Papers are attached. Staff is requesting that the NRAC provide input.

Next Steps

The Forest Service plans to incorporate input received regarding the Topic Papers into final documents for development of the Assessment by the Regional Team. The Draft Assessment is anticipated in early October, with a final Assessment later in the year, followed by an analysis of the need for change prior to development of the draft Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.

Attachment:

- Draft work product for the Focus Papers

² Refer to <http://inyoplanning.org/InyoNationalForest.htm>.

**Inyo National Forest Update/Revision
Draft Focus Paper Outline – Multiple Uses
Prepared by Inyo County Planning Department
July 26, 2013**

- I. Executive Summary (1 page)
 - a. Findings Summary
 - b. Recommendations
- II. Introduction (1/2 page)
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Roadmap
- III. Background (1 page)
 - a. 1988 Plan Update
 - b. Planning Since 1988
 - c. 2012 Planning Rule
 - d. Current Update/Revision Effort
 - e. County Priorities for Update/Revision
- IV. Setting (1 page)
 - a. Historical
 - b. Current Uses and their Importance (e.g. mining, grazing, packing, hiking, climbing, OHV, wooding, etc.)
 - c. Multiple Uses Sustained Yield Act
 - d. County Policies (e.g., General Plan, etc.)
- V. Issues and Trends (2 pages)
 - a. Community Vibrancy Tied to Multiple Uses
 - b. Separating Uses
 - c. Evolving Economy
 - d. Emerging Uses (boldering, trail running, fatbiking, unicycling, zip lines, etc.)
 - e. Demand for Water
 - f. Regulatory Impediments
 - g. Diminishing Access
- VI. Opportunities (2 pages)
 - a. Existing Uses
 - b. Potential New Uses/Diversification
 - c. Mixed Use Policies/Zoning
 - d. Information Technology/Digital 395
 - e. Streamlining
- VII. Constraints (2 pages)
 - a. Constrained Use Policies/Zoning
 - b. Social Change
 - c. Regulation
- VIII. Forest Service Approach (1 page)
 - a. Summary of Forest Service Plan Update/Revision Documentation Regarding Multiple Uses to Date
 - b. Critique
- IX. Conclusion (1/2 page)

**Inyo National Forest Update/Revision
Draft Focus Paper Outline – Socioeconomics
Prepared by Inyo County Planning Department
July 26, 2013**

- I. Executive Summary (1 page)
 - a. Findings Summary
 - b. Recommendations
- II. Introduction (1/2 page)
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Roadmap
- III. Background (1 page)
 - a. 1988 Plan Update
 - b. Planning Since 1988
 - c. 2012 Planning Rule
 - d. Current Update/Revision Effort
 - e. County Priorities for Update/Revision
- IV. Setting (1 page)
 - a. History
 - b. Culture
 - c. Economics
 - d. Policy Direction (i.e., General Plan, etc.)
- V. Issues and Trends (2 pages)
 - a. Local Socioeconomic Dependency on Forest
 - i. Recreation
 - ii. Agriculture
 - iii. Mineral Extraction
 - iv. Locational Residential Choice
 - v. Other
 - b. Natural Resource Maintenance
 - c. Regional, State, and National Socioeconomic Trends
 - d. Multiple Uses
 - e. Land Exchanges
 - f. Payment in lieu of Taxes (PILT)
 - g. Historic Resources
- VI. Opportunities (2 pages)
 - a. Increased Utilization of Forest Resources
 - i. Recreation
 - ii. Agriculture
 - iii. Mineral Extraction
 - iv. Renewable Energy/Transmission
 - v. Other
 - b. Involving Local Stakeholders
 - i. Concessions/Contracting
 - ii. Public/Private Partnerships
 - iii. Volunteerism
 - iv. Other Partnering Opportunities

- c. Off-Forest Economic Development Tied to On-Forest Resources
 - d. Enhancing Socio-Cultural Resources
- VII. Constraints (2 pages)
 - a. Restricted Areas
 - i. Wilderness
 - ii. Inventoried Roadless Areas
 - iii. Wild and Scenic Rivers
 - iv. Developed Areas
 - v. Other Areas Restricting Multiple Use
 - b. Endangered Species (amphibians, big horn sheep etc.)
 - c. Sensitive Areas (wetlands, cultural resources, etc.)
 - d. Institutional
 - e. Fiscal
 - f. Cultural
- VIII. Forest Service Approach (1 page)
 - a. Summary of Forest Service Plan/Update Revision Documentation Regarding Socioeconomics to Date
 - b. Critique
- IX. Conclusion (1/2 page)

**Inyo National Forest Update/Revision
Draft Focus Paper Outline – Access
Prepared by Inyo County Planning Department
July 26, 2013**

- I. Executive Summary (1 page)
 - a. Findings Summary
 - b. Recommendations
- II. Introduction (1/2 page)
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Roadmap
- III. Background (1 page)
 - a. 1988 Plan Update
 - b. Planning Since 1988
 - c. 2012 Planning Rule
 - d. Current Update/Revision Effort
 - e. County Priorities for Update/Revision
- IV. Setting (1 page)
 - a. Historical Access Network
 - b. Late 20th Century Trend to Diminish Access
 - i. Wilderness
 - ii. Inventoried Roadless Areas
 - iii. Permitting
 - c. Roads
 - i. County
 - ii. Forest
 - iii. Other Agencies
 - d. Trails
 - e. Air
 - f. Access Sorts
 - i. Leisure
 - ii. Commercial Recreation
 - iii. Mining
 - iv. Agriculture
 - v. Law Enforcement/Search and Rescue
- V. Issues and Trends (2 pages)
 - a. Diminishing Access
 - b. Mitigation of Perceived Impacts Resulting from Access
 - c. Status of County Roads
 - d. Maintaining Infrastructure
 - e. Aging Population
 - f. Information Technology
 - g. Access Amenity and Residential Location Choice
- VI. Opportunities (2 pages)
 - a. Expanding Access
 - b. Potential New Uses
 - c. Transit/Ridesharing

- d. Funding
- VII. Constraints (2 pages)
 - a. Social Change
 - b. Regulation
 - c. Funding
 - d. Diminishing Access
- VIII. Forest Service Approach (1 page)
 - a. Summary of Forest Service Plan Update/Revision Documentation Regarding Access to Date
 - b. Critique
- IX. Conclusion (1/2 page)

**Inyo National Forest Update/Revision
Draft Focus Paper Outline – Biological Resources
Prepared by Inyo County Planning Department
July 26, 2013**

- I. Executive Summary (1 page)
 - a. Findings Summary
 - b. Recommendations
- II. Introduction (1/2 page)
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Roadmap
- III. Background (1 page)
 - a. 1988 Plan Update
 - b. Planning Since 1988
 - c. 2012 Planning Rule
 - d. Current Update/Revision Effort
 - e. County Priorities for Update/Revision
- IV. Setting (1 page)
 - a. Historical Attachment to Biological Resources
 - b. Important Resources to the County
 - c. Policy Direction (i.e., General Plan, etc.)
- V. Issues and Trends (2 pages)
 - a. Overall Biological Trends
 - b. Diminishing Deer Herds and Competition for Habitat
 - c. Multiple Uses/Ecosystem Services
 - i. Tourism
 - ii. Water
 - iii. Other
 - d. Special Status Resources
 - i. Listed Species
 - ii. Species of Conservation Concern
 - iii. Critical Habitat
 - e. Catastrophic Events
 - i. Fire (including out of control managed fire)
 - ii. Floods
 - iii. Earthquakes/landslides/mudflows
 - f. Managed Fire
 - g. Population Growth and Increasing Use
 - h. Potential Impacts to Important Forest Resources from Overuse/Development
- VI. Opportunities (2 pages)
 - a. Public/Private Partnerships
 - b. Conserving Resources/Species of Local Importance
 - i. Hunting
 - ii. Fishing
 - iii. Nature Tourism
 - c. Multiple Uses/Ecosystem Services

- i. Agriculture
 - ii. Timber
 - iii. Access
 - iv. Other Development (e.g., resorts, renewable energy, etc.)
 - d. Mitigation/Enhancement
 - e. Education
- VII. Constraints (2 pages)
 - a. Permitting/Regulatory
 - i. Special-Status Species
 - ii. Species of Conservation Concern
 - iii. Critical Habitat
 - b. Off-Forest System Drivers
 - i. Climate Change
 - ii. Pollution from Central Valley
 - iii. Invasive Species
 - iv. Population Growth
 - c. Evolving Social Values
 - d. Disease
 - i. Human (West Nile, Hantavirus, Plague, etc.)
 - ii. Non-human
 - e. Catastrophic Events
- VIII. Forest Service Approach (1 page)
 - a. Summary of Forest Service Plan Update/Revision Documentation Regarding Biological Resources to Date
 - b. Critique
- IX. Conclusion (1/2 page)

**Inyo National Forest Update/Revision
Draft Focus Paper Outline – Infrastructure
Prepared by Inyo County
July 26, 2013**

- I. Executive Summary (1 page)
 - a. Findings Summary
 - b. Recommendations
- II. Introduction (1/2 Page)
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Roadmap
- III. Background (1 Page)
 - a. 1988 Plan Update
 - b. Planning Since 1988
 - c. 2012 Planning Rule
 - d. Current Update/Revision Effort
 - e. County priorities for Update/Revision
- IV. Setting (1 Page)
 - a. Roads and trails
 - b. Administrative facilities
 - c. Public Utilities
 - d. Private uses on National Forest Lands
 - e. Inyo County General Plan
- V. Issues and Trends (2 Pages)
 - a. Roads and Trails
 - i. Budget cuts for repairs and maintenance
 - ii. Stricter requirements for safety standards and resource protection guidelines
 - iii. Changing and increased usage
 - iv. Access
 - v. Natural Disasters on the forest and their impacts on County Maintained Roads and Communities
 - b. Services
 - i. Search & Rescue
 - ii. Fire Protection
 - iii. Law Enforcement
 - c. Admin Facilities / Recreational Facilities
 - i. Budget cuts and insufficient funding
 - ii. County Facilities on Forest Land
 1. Shooting Range
 - iii. Maintenance
 - d. Public Utilities
 - i. Dams / Possibility of Dam Failure and potential impacts on communities below

- ii. Renewable Energy resources
 - iii. Need for increased transmission infrastructure
 - e. Private Uses
 - i. Increased demand could require new infrastructure (i.e: fishing, packing, etc.)
 - ii. Communities within the Forest and their associated infrastructure: Aspendell, Starlite, Whitney Portal, Seven Pines (Kearsage Area), Parchers Camp, Rock Creek
- VI. Opportunities (2 Pages)
 - a. Funding sources
 - b. Coordination amongst agencies
 - c. Concessionaires
 - d. Volunteer groups
- VII. Constraints (2 Pages)
 - a. Financial resources
 - b. Environmental concerns
 - c. Designation of historic resources
 - d. Natural events (fire, earthquake, flood, mudflows)
 - e. Regulatory/Permitting
- VIII. Forest Service Approach (1 Page)
 - a. Summary of Forest Service Plan Update/Revision documentation regarding infrastructure resources to date
 - b. Critique
- IX. Conclusion (1/2 Page)