



Ventura County Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business

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May 16, 2013

Cleveland National Forest
10845 Rancho Bernardo Road
Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92127-2107
ATTN: LMP Amendment

RE: Comments to LMP Amendment

The Ventura County Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business (VC COLAB) would like to submit the following comments with respect to the Los Padres Draft EIR that proposes changes to land use zones within the Los Padres National Forest (LPNF). Our comments on this bill apply to our scope which is limited to Ventura County.

Those who advocate for additional wilderness designation wish to preserve conditions in existence today in perpetuity for the benefit of future generations. However, in our research and discussions with representing environmental organizations, it is apparent to us that the wilderness designation has an inherent risk of limiting the choices of future generations with potential unintended consequences including less future recreational access and less fire prevention activities in those areas. Based on the Wilderness Act of 1964, the stated intent of "wilderness" is: *"there shall be no temporary road~ no use of motor vehicles~ motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing of aircraft, no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area"*. We believe that consistency with these wilderness values has prevented the Forest Service from maintaining trails and conducting fire suppression activities within that designation. Although repair and maintenance of trails is faster and less expensive with motorized vehicles and equipment, these activities have not been considered consistent with wilderness values and while exceptions are possible, they are not common. The fear of lawsuits from certain environmental organizations and cost of environmental studies further reduce the likelihood of mechanized trail maintenance. Realistically, pre-fire suppression on a forest scale is only feasible with these activities. In general, we disagree that more wilderness designation is necessary in the LPNF and that the fear of future development that necessitates this has been overstated.

Therefore we are advocating for Alternative 1 – no change to the LUZ Allocations.

In alternative 2 and 3, we do not believe that Highway 33 can be adequately protected as it will not have a 1000' setback.

In addition, we believe wilderness designations close to urban areas will lead to increased fire danger to local residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lynn Gray Jensen".

Lynn Gray Jensen
Executive Director