
File Code: 1950
Date: April 9, 2025

Dear Interested Party:

The Los Padres National Forest (LPNF) is pleased to announce availability of the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Wildfire Risk Reduction Project. Formerly called the Ecological Restoration Project, the draft EA evaluates the environmental effects of the proposed project. The objective of this letter is to provide notification of the opportunity to comment on the draft EA pursuant to 36 CFR 218.

The LPNF Wildfire Risk Reduction Project aims to increase community/infrastructure protection and wildfire containment opportunities by establishing fuelbreaks, defense zones, and improve vegetation resilience and the health of forested areas from environmental stressors. With these goals in mind, the LPNF proposes (Alternative 2) a series of vegetation treatments on approximately 90,796 acres of land administered by the LPNF within Kern, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties. Treatments include mechanical thinning, hand thinning, chipping and grinding, piling and burning, mastication, mowing and weed-whipping, prescribed fire, targeted grazing, and planting and seeding. The LPNF anticipates up to 10,000 acres of treatments on average would be implemented annually for multiple years. The draft EA evaluates the environmental effects of two alternatives: the no action alternative (Alternative 1) and the proposed action (Alternative 2).

The draft EA, supporting analysis, and other information is available for review online at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/lpnf/landmanagement/projects>; click the View Project link for the Wildfire Risk Reduction Project. The draft EA can also be viewed at the LPNF Supervisor's Office, located at 1980 Old Mission Drive, Solvang, CA 93463.

The LPNF will host informational meetings prior to the 30-day public comment period. The meetings will begin with a presentation on the project followed by an open house session. Forest Service staff will be present to answer questions and maps of the project area available for viewing. Please note that no comments will be accepted at these meetings.

- April 21, 3:30 PM to 6:30 PM, Santa Maria Public Library, 421 South McClelland Street, Santa Maria, CA 93454
- April 22, 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM, Teams Live virtual meeting, [Join Meeting](#)
- April 23, 3:30 PM to 6:30 PM, Big Sur Lodge Conference Room, 47225 Highway One, Big Sur, CA 93920. Parking is limited at the conference room. Park at the main lodge parking lot and walk up.
- April 24, 3:30 PM to 6:30 PM, Mt. Pinos Ranger District Office, 34580 Lockwood Valley Rd., Frazier Park, CA 93225



How to Comment and Timeframe

This project is subject to comment pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. Only those who submit timely project-specific written comments during a designated public comment period are eligible to file an objection. Specific written comments should be written within the scope of the proposed actions, have a direct relationship to the proposed actions, and must include supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider (36 CFR 218.2). The Forest Service will accept comments on this proposal for 30-days (projected May 2 to June 2) following publication of the opportunity to comment legal notice in the Santa Barbara Independent, newspaper of record, which is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period. Commenters should not rely upon dates or time frame information provided by any other source. It is the commenter's responsibility to ensure timely receipt of comments (36 CFR 218.25).

Comments may be submitted electronically online via the Wildfire Risk Reduction Project website (see link and directions above). From the project website, click on the 'Comment/Object on Project' link located on the right-hand side under the 'Get Connected' box. Alternatively, you can use the following link to submit electronic comment:

<https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=62369>. Comments may also be mailed to the LPNF Supervisor's Office, Attn: Kyle Kinports; 1980 Old Mission Drive, Solvang, CA 93463; or hand delivered to the LPNF Supervisor's Office (address shown above) during business hours (Monday- Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm PST). Individuals or representatives of an entity submitting comments must sign the comments or verify identity upon request.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the LPNF with the ability to provide the respondent with subsequent environmental documents.

For questions concerning this proposal, please contact Kyle Kinports at 805-961-5710. Thank you for your interest and participation in the management of the LPNF.

Sincerely,

X

ROMAN TORRES
Forest Supervisor