



---

**File Code:** 1950  
**Date:** December 12, 2016

Dear Friend,

I am pleased to share with you the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and draft Record of Decision (ROD) for the Smith River National Recreation Area Restoration and Motorized Travel Management Project. The selected Alternative 6 supports the values for which the Smith River National Recreation Area (NRA) was designated, and reflects the extensive public involvement and Del Norte County collaboration that guided the development and analysis of this project. The selected alternative provides an improved level of safe motorized uses and access to dispersed recreation opportunities, while reducing risk to Port-Orford-cedar, Region 5 sensitive plants, water quality, the anadromous fishery, public safety and cultural resources within the project area consistent with the goals and objectives of the Six Rivers National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP). The project area is the Gasquet Ranger District, exclusive of wilderness areas and traditional cultural properties.

I selected Alternative 6 based on my review of public comments, the alternatives and their effects, supporting documentation, and how well it meets the purpose and need of the project. My review of the project record shows a thorough analysis using the best available science, as well as a thorough consideration of local values and national standards. The selected alternative provides a balance between conserving natural and cultural resource values, while also providing for safety, and motorized public and administrative access.

The selected Alternative 6 would designate 47 miles of motorized trails, 24 miles of new Maintenance Level (ML) 2 (mixed-use) roads and 4 parking areas (along Forest Service Road 17N49) as open for motorized use. In addition, the following actions would occur on open roads for public safety and to reduce impacts to resources: Griffin Creek Bridge, on Forest Service Road 18N07, would be repaired; 107 miles of ML 2 roads would be stormproofed; and 18 seasonal gates installed. It would also restore drainage patterns, and close (via gates or barricades) 32 miles of ML 1 roads, 93 miles of unauthorized routes (UARs) not designated and 53 miles of ML 1 and 2 roads identified for decommissioning. The FEIS and draft ROD are available for review at the Forest Supervisor's Office, at 1330 Bayshore Way, in Eureka, California; or online at [www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=38813](http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=38813).

The draft ROD implements a land management plan and is subject to objection pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B. Objections will be accepted only from those who have previously submitted specific written comments regarding the project either during scoping or another designated opportunity for public comment in accordance with §218.5(a). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the project unless based on new information arising after the designated comment periods.



Objections, including attachments, must be filed within 45 days following the publication of the legal notice in the Eureka Times-Standard. The publication date of the legal notice in the Eureka Times-Standard is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection (§218.6). Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. It is the objector's responsibility to ensure evidence of timely receipt (36 CFR 218.9). Letters and attachments received after the 45-day objection period will not be considered.

Individual members of organizations must have submitted their own comments to meet the requirements of eligibility as an individual. Objections received on behalf of an organization are considered as those of the organization only. If an objection is submitted on behalf of a number of individuals or organizations, each individual or organization listed must meet the eligibility requirement of having previously submitted comments on the project. Names and addresses of objectors will become part of the public record. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification (§218.7).

An objection must be filed in writing by way of fax, e-mail, hand-delivery, US postal service, or express delivery with the Objection Review Officer. The physical and mailing address is: Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service, 1323 Club Drive, Vallejo, CA 94592. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered objections are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The fax number is (707) 562-9229. Electronic objections submitted by e-mail to [objections-pacificsouthwest-regional-office@fs.fed.us](mailto:objections-pacificsouthwest-regional-office@fs.fed.us) must be in common formats (.txt, .rtf, .doc, .pdf) and contain the following subject line: *Smith River NRA Restoration & Motorized Travel Management* (§218.7).

The notice of objection must meet the content requirements at 36 CFR 218.8.

The Responsible Official for the proposed land management project may not issue a decision until the Objection Reviewing Officer has responded in writing to all pending objections (§218.12). A written response will be issued within 45 days following the end of the objection-filing period. The time for objection responses may be extended by the Objection Reviewing Officer for up to 30 days (§218.26).

For additional information concerning this project or the Forest Service objection process, please contact David Palmer, Gasquet District Ranger, at (707) 457-3860, or Carol Spinos, forest environmental coordinator, at (707) 441-3561.

Thank you for your interest in the Six Rivers National Forest.

Sincerely,



MERV GEORGE JR.  
Forest Supervisor