



Notice of Proposed Action

Clear Creek Travel Management Plan

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

**Carson Ranger District, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
Carson City and Douglas County, Nevada**

September, 2005

COMMENTS WELCOME

The Carson Ranger District of the Humboldt Toiyabe National Forest welcomes your comments on its proposal to improve travel management in the Clear Creek and Kings Canyon areas of Carson City and Douglas County (See Map). The proposal includes designating roads and trails for motorized and nonmotorized uses and closing the area to cross country travel by vehicles.

BACKGROUND / PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

This proposal was identified in the Clear Creek/Kings Canyon Strategy. The analysis area is located on the Carson Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in western Nevada. It encompasses approximately 17,000 acres, of which 10,000 acres are National Forest System lands

located west of U.S. Highway 395 near Carson City, Nevada, along the California-Nevada border. The landscape analysis area includes the Clear Creek (10,234 acres), Kings Canyon (4,165 acres), and Voltaire Canyon (2,461 acres) sub-areas. Land ownership status in the Clear Creek/Kings Canyon analysis area is 60.0 percent in National Forest System lands, 31.1 percent in private lands, 3.8 percent in Nevada state lands, and 1.9 percent in mixed (private/tribal).

Human influence in the analysis area vicinity is increasing. Construction of subdivisions with urban densities is becoming more widespread just east of the Clear Creek/Kings Canyon landscape analysis area in Carson City and south in Douglas County. The existing land uses and zoning pose a challenge to managing the adjacent National Forest System lands for ecosystem integrity and ecological sustainability.

U.S. Highway 50, which runs east-west and bisects the Clear Creek watershed, is a highly traveled route connecting Carson

City with Lake Tahoe. The Clear Creek Road (Old Highway 50) and Kings Canyon Road provide access into more remote National Forest System lands in the analysis area for hiking, biking, equestrian, and/or off-highway vehicle (OHV) users. OHV use is a predominant recreational activity in Voltaire Canyon, located directly east of Carson City.

Recreational use, including mountain biking, off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, and hiking, of the Clear Creek/Kings Canyon area is high as a result of the area's proximity to population centers such as Lake Tahoe, Carson City, and Douglas County. The residents of the Carson Front Range and other out-of-town visitors are demanding public access to more recreation opportunities. Hence, there is a need for additional looping trails system and developed recreation facilities such as day use areas and trailheads.

The U.S. Forest Service involved the public and local government agencies to help identify issues and land/resource management concerns for the Clear Creek/Kings Canyon Strategy. A public meeting was held in March 2003, which was attended by about 40 local residents and agency representatives. In addition, a short article about the landscape analysis was published in "The Flow", a newsletter by the Carson Water Subconservancy District. An overview of the landscape strategy was presented to the Clear Creek Watershed Council at one of their regular meetings. Agencies consulted include Carson City, Douglas County, the Washoe Tribe, and Nevada Department of Transportation. The U.S. Forest Service worked in close cooperation with Carson City Department of Recreation and Open Space staff in developing the recreation issues and associated recommendations. The Nevada

Division of Forestry, Nevada Department of Wildlife, and Nevada Division of Water Resources provided relevant background information for the Strategy.

The Strategy made the following recommendations:

- Voltaire Canyon and Kings Canyon: In partnership with Carson City, designate a system of OHV use roads and trails. The road network would utilize existing roads and may involve the relocation of some road segments and new road construction. Using existing roads and trails identify a travel route from the Voltaire Canyon OHV trailhead to Kings Canyon.
- Kings Canyon Road: The Kings Canyon Road to Spooner Summit should allow access for public recreation use and be maintained for high clearance vehicles.
- Old Clear Creek Road: Maintain the Old Clear Creek Road from the Clear Creek Trailhead on National Forest System lands to Spooner Summit for fire-related access and administrative use.

THE PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action includes these provisions:

- Road/Trail System
Update the Carson Ranger District Travel Management Plan for the Clear Creek/Kings Canyon area by designating a system of motorized and nonmotorized routes to better meet user needs and protect the

environment. Designate 12 miles of roads open to the public, 7 miles of administrative roads, 4.5 miles of motorized two track trails, and 4.5 miles of nonmotorized trails (Map). About 17 miles of roads and other routes would be closed to motor vehicle use and rehabilitated as needed. Cross country motor vehicle use off of designated motorized routes would be prohibited.

- **Motorized Travel**

Roads would be maintained for use by high clearance vehicles. Motorized two track trails would be maintained at a lower standard. They are generally steeper and rougher than roads and would be most suitable for off highway and all terrain vehicles.

- **Nonmotorized Travel**

Nonmotorized trails would be open to hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians, and other nonmotorized users and closed to motorized use. Cross country travel by nonmotorized mechanized vehicles such as mountain bikes would be prohibited. Nonmotorized travel would be allowed on all designated routes, including administrative roads.

- **Signing and Patrolling**

Designated routes would be mapped and signed. The area would be patrolled by Forest Service personnel to enforce closures. Volunteers would be solicited from both motorized and nonmotorized recreation communities to help with

monitoring, enforcement, and public education efforts.

- **Exceptions for Off Road Use**

Motorized uses off designated routes that require a permit (such as fuelwood cutting) would be authorized on a case by case basis. Motorized uses that do not require a permit – temporary camping and game retrieval only – would be allowed within 100 feet of designated routes so long as it does not result in resource damage.

COMMENT PROCESS

The Forest Service encourages your substantive comments on this proposed action, along with supporting reasons that the responsible official should consider in reaching a decision (36 CFR 215.6(a)(3)).

Your comments will help us prepare an environmental assessment on the proposed action. The assessment will be used to determine whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or a finding of no significant impact. If there is no potential for significant impacts, that finding along with the environmental assessment and a decision notice will be released for public information. A 45-day appeal period will be provided after release of the environmental assessment, finding of no significant impact, and decision notice. If the environmental assessment concludes that there is the potential for significant impacts then an environmental impact statement would be prepared.

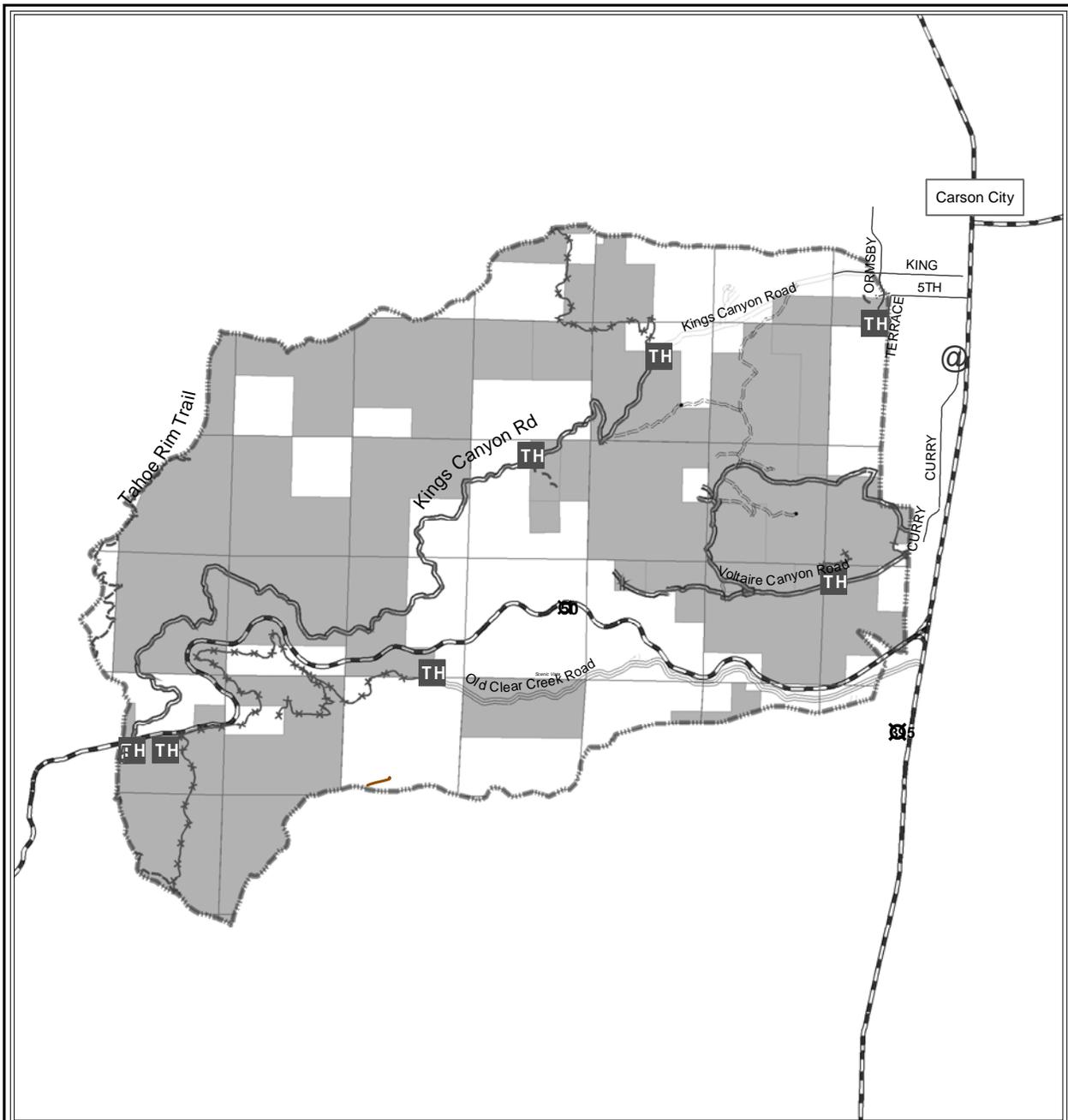
To maintain eligibility for appeal, each individual or, for an organization, an authorized representative, must submit substantive comments on this proposed action and must sign the comments or

otherwise verify their identity. Substantive comments are those within the scope of, are specific to, and have a direct relationship to the proposed action, and include supporting reasons that the Responsible Officials should consider in reaching a decision.

Please send your comments to the Responsible Official for this project, who is Gary Schiff, Carson District Ranger, 1536 South Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89703; phone (775) 882-2766 fax (775) 884-8199; or you may hand-deliver your comments to the above address during normal business hours from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. Email comments may be sent to comments-intermtn-humboldt-toiyabe-carson@fs.fed.us. The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of the legal notice in the Reno Gazette Journal.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public inspection and will be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

Additional information on the proposed action may be obtained by contacting Larry Randall or David Loomis, 1536 South Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89703; phone (775) 882-2766 fax (775) 884-8199.



Proposed Routes

-  Roads open to all vehicles
(Maintenance level 2, high clearance vehicles recommended)
-  Trails open to all off highway vehicles
(motorized two-track trail; 40" wide or greater)
-  Administrative use only roads
(non-motorized use permitted)
-  Trails open to non-motorized use only
(non-motorized single-track trail; 40" wide or less)

CLEAR CREEK/KINGS CANYON TRAVEL MANAGEMENT PLAN

PROPOSED ACTION



This GIS product was compiled from various sources and may be corrected, Modified, or replaced at any time. For more information, contact the GIS Department at the Carson Ranger District, Carson City, NV (775) 882-2766.

-  Trailhead
-  Project Boundary
-  National Forest System Lands



0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles

Map Produced: August 4, 2005