

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Forest Service  
Pacific-Southwest Region

**DECISION MEMO**

State of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Sugar Pine Conservation Camp  
Special Use Permit Renewal and Additional Sewer and Water System Enhancements

Sugar Pine Canyon

Approximately 21 Air Miles Northeast of the City of Redding

Shasta Lake Ranger District  
Shasta-Trinity National Forest  
Shasta County, California

**Background**

The State of California through the Director of the Department of General Services acting for the benefit of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) has applied to the Forest Service for the renewal of their existing Special Use Permit. In addition, the DGS has applied to install an additional septic tank, grease trap, water well and water tank to reduce or eliminate the amount of solids flowing into the sewage ponds and increase the amount of available potable water.

In 1984, the Forest Service issued a Special Use Permit to Cal Fire for the construction, operation and maintenance of a 120-person inmate conservation camp on 40 acres of National Forest System lands for a term of 20 years. In 1986 the Special Use Permit was amended after a survey was completed and the actual acreage was calculated at 75.046 acres. In 1991 Amendment II added an additional 2.527 acres. In 1997 an additional 5.00 acres was added to the permit for construction of additional sewage ponds, this is known as Amendment III. Currently, the existing Sugar Pine Conservation Camp facilities total 82.573 acres entirely on National Forest System lands. The legal description of this conservation camp is within the East ½ of the East ½ of Section 4, Township 33 North, Range 2 West, Mount Diablo Meridian as shown on the attached map labeled Exhibit A.

Facilities to be installed include a 15,000 gallon septic tank adjacent to the existing septic tank, a 5,000 gallon grease trap replacing the current undersized grease trap, water well up to 600 feet in depth and a 20,000 gallon water tank. Utility trenches will be constructed as needed including a trench to connect the water system to the existing shower house. All facilities are located within the current boundary of the camp in previously impacted areas. All earth work will be done with a backhoe/excavator-type piece of equipment.

## Decision

I will renew the Special Use Permit for the existing facilities and the additional water and septic improvements to the State of California through the Director of the Department of General Services acting for the benefit of Cal Fire for a term of 20 years. The environmental impacts of the proposed actions are minimal, consisting of less than ¼ acre of vegetation removal and limited air quality impacts due to construction dust. There will be very minimal visual and noise quality impacts during the construction phase of this project due to the remote location of the camp.

This action is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment because there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action (see below) and the proposed action qualifies under two provisions of FSH 1909.15, 31.2, category 15 and category 3. Category 15 states: "Issuance of a new special use authorization for a new term to replace an existing or expired special use authorization when the only changes are administrative, there are no changes to the authorized facilities or increases in the scope or intensity of authorized activities, and the applicant or holder is in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the special use authorization. FSH 1909.15, 31.2, category 3 states: "Approval, modification or continuation of minor special uses of National Forest System lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land".

The categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment:

- a. Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species. The project area is previously disturbed due to the original construction of Sugar Pine Conservation Camp. The project area is located approximately ½ mile south of Sugar Pine Canyon. An ephemeral draw bisects that property in a Northeast to Southwest direction dries up in late spring and remains dry until late fall. There are no aquatic or riparian concerns within the location of the septic tank, grease trap, water well or new water tank. As a pre-caution a twenty-five foot equipment exclusion zone will be established by Cal Fire prior to any excavation on the east side of the ephemeral draw below the location of the new septic tank to insure there is no impact to any aquatic species or riparian habitat. Therefore no BE/BA or consultation with NOAA Fisheries is required. Based on the lack of suitable habitat, there will be no affect to Sensitive plant or fungi species. There are no known endangered, threatened, proposed, candidate, Forest Service sensitive or Management Indicator Species (MIS) within or near the project area.
- b. Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds are not included in the project area.
- c. Congressionally designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas. This project is not within Congressionally designated areas.
- d. Inventory roadless areas. This project is not within any inventoried roadless areas.
- e. Research natural areas. This project is not within a research natural area.
- f. American Indian religious or cultural sites. The project area has been previously disturbed. However, the archeology report identifies site CA-SHA-1483 which will have

the western edge of the site marked by temporary plastic fencing to avoid potential impacts to this site. Consequently, the new construction will have no effect to any significant archaeological properties.

g. Archeological sites, or historical properties or areas. See section f above.

### **Public Involvement**

Scoping on this project included public notices in the Record Searchlight, discussions with the project proponents and Shasta-Trinity Forest staff. No significant issues were identified and no comments were received from the public.

### **Findings required by Other Law**

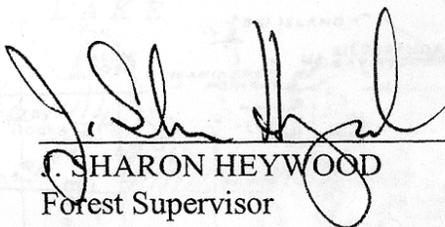
This decision is consistent with the Shasta-Trinity National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan), as required by the National Forest Management Act. This project is in conformance with forest plan management direction within section 4-5 section 28 Social/Economic: "Emphasize the development of partnership programs through coordination with interested public and agencies." The Sugar Pine Conservation Camp is noted in the Forest Plan on page 4-133 under Public Use and Resource Attractions: "Sugar Pine Conservation Camp is managed under a special use permit by the California Department of Corrections."

### **Implementation**

Implementation of this proposal may take place immediately upon the date of this decision.

### **Administrative Review or Appeals Opportunity**

My decision is not subject to administrative appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.12. "The following decisions are not subject to appeal under this part, (f) Decisions for actions that have been categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement in FSH 1909.15, Section 30 and 31."

  
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J. SHARON HEYWOOD  
Forest Supervisor

Date 9 Dec 08

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