



DECISION NOTICE
**5-YEAR SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR THE POLKA DOT MOTORCYCLE
CLUB ENDUROS**
U.S. FOREST SERVICE
PLACERVILLE AND AMADOR RANGER DISTRICTS
EL DORADO COUNTY, CA

DECISION

I have reviewed the 5-year Special Use Permit for the Polka Dot Motorcycle Club Enduros Environmental Assessment (EA) and the analysis in the project file. I have considered the comments submitted during the public scoping period and during the comment period in response to the Preliminary EA. Based on my review of these documents, I have decided to implement Alternative 4.

DECISION RATIONALE

My reasons for the decision are based on the need for the project as well as how the alternative addressed issues raised during the comment period.

Response to Purpose and Need

Alternative 4 will allow use of National Forest System (NFS) lands by individuals and families through participation in organized events. It introduces new visitors to the recreation opportunities available on the Eldorado National Forest (ENF), through a safe managed event, providing opportunities for them to learn how to ride and camp responsibly. It encourages the public to visit their National Forest while also providing protection for the natural and cultural resources. Alternative 4 contributes to meeting the Eldorado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP, page 4-112) objectives by providing off highway recreation opportunities. It provides for confinement of dispersed camping west of Elkins Flat to minimize disturbance to other resources during the event. It allows for intensive use of the existing Elkins Flat and Gold Note trail systems for 2 events, each lasting about 8 hours, per year.

I did not select Alternative 2 because taking no action would not address the need to provide organized recreation opportunities and contribute to meeting the LRMP objectives.

I did not select Alternatives 1 and 3 because I wanted to minimize impacts on aquatic habitat and reduce sediment delivery to streams.

Response to Issues

The public expressed concerns during the comment period about the project potentially affecting the red-legged frog and sediment delivery into Middle Dry Creek negatively affecting aquatic

habitat. Alternative 3 was created to respond to the issue of the project affecting the red-legged frog by eliminating portions of trails that cross perennial streams from use during the motorcycle events, due to the intensity and frequency of riders above base line levels of use. Alternative 4 was created to address the negative effects of sediment delivery into Middle Dry Creek on aquatic habitat by eliminating use of portions of trails 25 (stream crossing #1 on Middle Dry Creek) and 26 (McKinney Creek stream crossing) and road 9N55 during the motorcycle events.

Alternative 4 will minimize impacts to aquatic habitat by reducing the potential for sediment delivery into Middle Dry Creek by not allowing use on three routes. Alternative 4 also reduces the potential impacts on CRLF and associated habitat by minimizing stream crossings and instituting a Limited Operation Period.

Alternatives Considered

Alternatives analyzed in detail included:

1. Alternative 1 would issue a 5-year Special Use Permit to the Polka Dots Motorcycle Club (PDMC) for the purpose of holding the 49er and Family Enduro's each year. A multidistrict permit would be issued because, historically, the 49er Enduro was held on the Placerville Ranger District and the Family Enduro was held on the Amador District. Under a multidistrict permit both events may utilize system roads and trails authorized under the Eldorado National Forest Public Wheeled Motorized Travel Management EIS.
2. Under Alternative 2 a 5-year Special Use Permit would not be issued to the PDMC for the purpose of holding the 49er and Family Enduro's each year.
3. Alternative 3 is the same as Alternative 1 except all trails that cross live streams would be eliminated.
4. Alternative 4 is the same as Alternative 1 except portions of trails 25 (stream crossing #1 on Middle Dry Creek) and 26 (McKinney Creek stream crossing) and road 9N55 would be eliminated from use during the motorcycle events. There are additional design criteria included in Alternative 4 to minimize effects to red-legged frogs.

All design criteria will be implemented as described on pages 3 through 6 of the EA. These include:

1. Relocate staging, checkpoints, or other areas of concentrated event use, if a reproductive pair or nest sites for the California spotted owl or northern goshawk are located in the vicinity.
2. Complete surveys for California red-legged frogs (CRLF) 300 feet upstream and downstream at all wet crossings 24 hours prior to the motorcycle events. If CRLFs are located at wet crossings, the crossings would not be used for the event and consultation with the US Fish & Wildlife Service would be re-initiated.
3. Inspect vehicles the day of the events to verify equipment is weed free. All race participants would arrive with clean vehicles and equipment to avoid introducing and spreading invasive species.

4. Monitor archeological sites along the proposed routes annually. Known sites would be visually monitored for damage to sites due to evidence of vehicle tracks off of the designated trails into the sites.
5. Flag and monitor known sensitive plant occurrences adjacent to the trail prior to and following the motorcycle events. Known sites would be visually monitored for new impacts to plants and potential habitat.
6. Harden the approaches to the wet stream crossings at McKinney Creek (trail 26); Middle Dry Creek (trail 38, crossing #2) prior to the first motorcycle event.
7. Monitor the wet crossings during and after the motorcycle events.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This action was originally listed as a proposal on the Eldorado National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions (April 2009, 2010 and 2011) and updated periodically during the analysis. People were invited to review and comment on the proposal during the scoping period and through circulation of the EA.

The agency mailed letters on February 10, 2011 to 17 people to provide them an opportunity to comment on the detailed description of the proposed action. The letter asked them to identify points of dispute, debate or disagreement (issues) regarding this proposal. The EA lists agencies and people consulted on pages 31. The Forest Service received three letters. After reviewing the public comments submitted, Alternative 3 and 4 were developed in response to the issues.

The legal notice of comment was published in the newspaper of record on August 3, 2011 and copies of the EA were sent to 8 individuals. Consideration of the comments and agency responses are summarized in Appendix B of the EA.

FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

My decision is consistent with the National Forest Management Act as well as the Eldorado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as amended by the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment Final Environmental Impact Statement (January 2004).

A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and EA were considered. I determined these actions will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will not be prepared. A finding of no significant impact is attached to this decision notice.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW (APPEAL) OPPORTUNITIES

Pursuant to 36 CFR 215.11, this decision is subject to administrative review (appeal). The appeal must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, or express delivery) with the Appeal Deciding Officer, Randy Moore, Regional Forester, Pacific Southwest Region, Regional

Office, R5, 1323 Club Drive, Vallejo, CA 94592. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. This notice of appeal must meet the appeal content requirements at 36 CFR 215.14. Submit emailed appeals in plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf) or Word (.doc) formats to appeals-pacificsouthwest-regional-office@fs.fed.us.

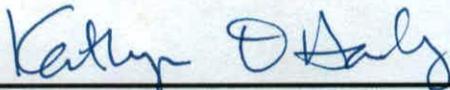
In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification. Appeals must be filed within 45 days from the publication date of legal notice of decision in the Mountain Democrat, published in Placerville, CA. Appeals received after the 45 day appeal period will not be considered. Only individuals or organizations who submitted comments or expressed interest in the proposal by the end of the comment period may appeal this decision. Individuals and organizations wishing to appeal must meet information requirements of 36 CFR 215.6

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The project is planned for implementation in May 2012. If no appeal is filed, implementation of this project may begin on but not before the fifth business day following the close of the appeal-filing period.

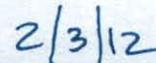
CONTACT

For additional information concerning this decision, contact: Catherine Bounds, Placerville Ranger District Recreation Officer, 4260 Eight Mile Road, Camino, CA 95709 (530) 647-5304.



Kathryn D. Hardy

Eldorado National Forest Supervisor



Date

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