
File Code: 1900; 2400

Date: February 16, 2016

Dear Interested Party,

The Santa Catalina Ranger District of the Coronado National Forest is seeking comments on a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Catalina-Rincon FireScape Project (CRFS). The CRFS is a landscape-scale restoration project that focuses on promoting resilient ecosystems; protecting life, property, and natural resources; and encouraging natural wildland fire to function as a healthy process in the ecosystem. The CRFS project area comprises approximately 265,000 acres of National Forest System Lands in Pima, Pinal and Cochise counties, and includes two wilderness areas, two research natural areas, and six inventoried roadless areas.

To accomplish the proposed action, the Coronado NF Land and Resource Management Plan may be amended to implement the Scenery Management System, which would replace visual quality objectives with scenic integrity objectives in the project area.

The CRFS was planned in collaboration with U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (Saguaro National Park East) and Bureau of Land Management; the State of Arizona (Oracle State Park, Catalina State Park and Arizona State Trust Lands); Pima County; The Nature Conservancy; the University of Arizona; and private landowners. **For the purposes of this comment period, the draft EA proposes and analyzes only Forest Service actions that would take place exclusively on National Forest System lands.**

The draft EA will be available on the Coronado National Forest website at http://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/nepa_project_exp.php?project=27526 on or after February 19, 2016. Hard copies will be made available at the Joel D. Valdez Main Library, Kirk-Bear Canyon Library, Santa Catalina Ranger District Office, or upon request.

Comments

The U.S. Forest Service will accept comments on this proposal for 30 calendar days following publication of the opportunity to comment legal notice in the Newspaper of Record, the *Arizona Daily Star*, which is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period. If the comment period ends on a Saturday, Sunday, or a Federal holiday, comments will be accepted until the end of the next Federal working day. Commenters should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source, *including* the dates in this letter, which are an estimate. It is the commenter's responsibility to ensure timely receipt of comments (36 CFR 218.25).

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 opportunity for public comment are eligible to file an objection. Furthermore, issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities for comment. Comments submitted during the 30-day comment period on the draft EA will be considered in the analysis.



Written comments may be submitted electronically, or by email, mail, fax, or in person at any Coronado National Forest office (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays).

Send comments via mail to:

U.S. Forest Service, Coronado National Forest
Santa Catalina Ranger District
Attn: Christina Pearson, Interdisciplinary Team Leader
5700 N. Sabino Canyon Road
Tucson, AZ 85750

Send comments via fax to: Attn: Christina Pearson, 520-749-7723

Send electronic comments in common formats (.doc, .pdf, .rtf, .txt, .html) formats to:

<https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//CommentInput?Project=27526>

Comments received in response to this opportunity to comment notice, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this project and will be available for public inspection. Electronic comments must show name and address of submitter. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to object the subsequent decision under 36 CFR 218. Additionally, any persons may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality (7 CFR 1.27(d)). Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances. The Forest Service will inform the requestor of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality. Where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requestor that the comment may be resubmitted within 15 days.

Public Meetings

All interested parties are invited to review the draft EA and attend open house meetings being held for this project. The open house meetings are opportunities to learn more about the proposal. Open houses will be held at the following times and locations:

Saturday, February 20, 2016 - 10:00 am-12:00 pm. Chuck Bowden Mt. Lemmon Community Center. 12949 N. Sabino Canyon Pkwy., Mt. Lemmon, AZ 85619.

Tuesday, February 23, 2016 - 6:00-8:00 pm. Oracle Fire Department, 1475 W. American Ave., Oracle, AZ 85623.

Thursday, February 25 - 6:00-8:00 pm. Morris K. Udall Regional Center, 7200 E. Tanque Verde Rd., Tucson, AZ 85715

If you have questions concerning this process, please contact Christina Pearson at 520-760-2315 or by email SantaCatalinaRD@fs.fed.us.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kenneth Born

KENNETH BORN
District Ranger