San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study

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We continue to make progress on the San Gabriel Watershed and Mountains Special Resource Study. We received approximately 12,000 public and stakeholder comments on the draft study report last fall and winter. We have reviewed all of the 12,000 comments, and we are now determining how best to address them. We will make necessary revisions and technical corrections to the study report, prepare a "Finding of No Significant Impact" which will include the "selected" or preferred alternative, and finalize the study for transmittal through the NPS to the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary of the Interior will then submit the final study report to Congress along with his own recommendation. The final study and recommendation will be made available to the public after the study has been transmitted to Congress.

We appreciate your interest in this study!

Next Steps in the Study Process

- ✓ Selection of a "preferred alternative" by the Director of the National Park Service
- ✓ Technical revisions to the draft study report
- ✓ Preparation of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
- ✓ Review of the final study report in Washington by the NPS and the Department of the Interior
- ✓ Transmittal of the final study report to Congress, along with recommendation from the Secretary of the Interior
- ✓ Release of the final study report and recommendations to the public

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: When will the final study be available?
A: The final study report will be made available following transmittal to Congress. Given the volume of comments received on the draft study and the agency review processes, the NPS cannot determine the exact time frame for completion of the final study at this time. The NPS appreciates the interest in the study and would like to ensure that each comment is given due consideration.

Q: Does the NPS have a preferred alternative?
A: The NPS has not yet identified an agency preferred alternative for the special resource study. An environmentally preferable alternative was identified in the draft study report (Alternative D) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. The environmentally preferable alternative should not be viewed as the NPS preferred alternative.

The special resource study process requires the Director of the NPS to identify which alternative or combination of alternatives would be most effective and efficient in protecting significant resources and providing for visitor enjoyment. The Director will make this determination while considering public and stakeholder comment. The Director's selected alternative will be the NPS preferred alternative. It will be included in the final study report forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior and transmitted to Congress.

Q: Does the NPS have to select one of the alternatives presented in the draft study report?
A: The Director of the NPS could select an alternative presented in the draft study report or a combination of the alternatives presented. The NPS may also make minor revisions and technical corrections to the alternatives, to the extent that the revisions do not warrant additional environmental analysis.

Q: What if the NPS chooses an alternative that includes land in my community?
A: The NPS preferred alternative is only a recommendation to Congress. Implementation of any of the alternatives would require Congressional legislation. As stated in the draft study report, all of the alternatives presented would respect private property rights and existing authorities. An NPS designation, as proposed in the study report, would not establish additional regulatory or land use control over existing authorities and local governments. NPS land management regulations and policies would only apply to lands that the NPS acquires or owns. The NPS would only acquire land by donation or from willing sellers.

Q: What would happen to the Angeles National Forest and other public lands if a national park unit were established?
A: All of the alternatives considered in the draft special resource study propose continued management of the Angeles National Forest by the U.S. Forest Service. All of the alternatives envision continued management of public and private lands by the existing landowners, whether private or public, local, state or federal.

Q: How will the study recommendations be implemented?
A: Implementation of any of the alternatives would require Congressional legislation. If Congress does not pass legislation to implement the study's recommendations, then the study would simply remain as a recommendation. If Congress passes legislation establishing a national park unit in the area, the legislation would be the guiding policy for the park unit. The legislation, while likely based on the study recommendations, would supersede the recommendations of the study report.

If a national park unit is established, the NPS would work with area partners on a management plan that would provide a vision for the park unit and more detailed guidance for implementation. Such a plan would be completed with public involvement.

For more information:

Please visit the study website: www.nps.gov/pwro/sangabriel. Periodic updates will be posted to this web site. You can also download all previously published documents, newsletters, and maps, or sign yourself up for the study mailing list.

As directed by Congress in July 2003 (P.L. 108-042) , the National Park Service (NPS) is conducting a "special resource study" of portions of the San Gabriel River and its tributaries from the city of Santa Fe Springs to the north, and the San Gabriel Mountains within the territory of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy. This area includes portions of the Angeles National Forest, as well as many communities along the San Gabriel River. Many people, organizations, and agencies are working to conserve resources in this area to provide recreational opportunities, habitat restoration, watershed improvement, and flood protection. This study is intended to build on and complement the efforts that are underway.