

visitor experience, and sensitive resource areas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Contact Superintendent, Padre Island National Seashore, at the above address and telephone number.

Dated: February 26, 1999.

John Gibson,

Acting Superintendent, Padre Island National Seashore.

[FR Doc. 99-4481 Filed 2-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-70-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Notice of Scoping for Fire Management Plan Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks Tulare & Fresno Counties, California

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et. seq.) that public scoping has been initiated for a conservation planning and impact analysis process for updating the fire management plan for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The purpose of the scoping process is to elicit early public comment regarding issues and concerns, a suitable range of alternatives and appropriate mitigating measures, and the nature and extent of potential environmental impacts which should be addressed.

Background

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, units of the National Park System, are managed as one administrative unit. Extensive research has shown that fire is a significant natural process across a large portion of the 864,000 acres of the parks. An extensive fire management program was begun in 1968 and has continued to the present time. All forms of fire management, from aggressive suppression to managing natural (lightning) ignitions, have been used to achieve natural and cultural resource management and hazard fuel reduction goals. The parks fire management program also has a significant fire prevention and suppression function.

The last revision of the fire management plan culminated in a *Finding Of No Significant Impact*, dated November 1, 1989. Since that time, a range of new issues, improved information, and unforeseeable constraints have emerged which have the potential to affect the future direction of the fire management

program within the parks. Some of these issues include but are not limited to: a continued decline in ecosystem health due to fire suppression, increased hazards and costs associated with fire suppression, and more stringent air quality regulations.

Comment and Approval

As noted, the National Park Service will undertake an environmental analysis effort to address issues and alternatives for fire management in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. At this time, it has not been determined whether an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared, however, this scoping process will aid in the preparation of either document.

As the first step in this undertaking, a series of five public scoping meetings will be conducted during March, 1999. California cities where scoping meetings will be held are:

- Wednesday March 3, 7:00 pm at Fort Miller Middle School Cafeteria, 1302 E. Dakota, Fresno;
- Wednesday March 10, 7:00 pm at the Tulare County Education Center (Education Building Corner of Burrel Ave. near the County Civic Center), Visalia;
- Monday March 15, 7:00 pm at the Visitor Center Auditorium at Griffith Park, Los Angeles;
- Monday March 22, 7:00 pm at the Presidio Visitor Center, 1st floor conference room, Building 102 on Montgomery St., San Francisco (adjacent parking available on parade grounds);
- Tuesday March 23, 7:30 pm at Three Rivers Union School gym.

For those unable to attend meetings, a scoping document will be available through the park. The main topics addressed in the scoping document and meetings are: background information on the fire management program; a review of relevant policy and law affecting the fire management program; an assessment of current fire management needs; and the identification of issues and alternatives related to the fire management in the parks.

Interested individuals, organizations, and agencies are invited to provide comments or suggestions. Written comments regarding the fire management program must be postmarked no later than June 7, 1999. For additional information on the scoping meetings, or to request a copy of the scoping background material and provide comments, please contact: Superintendent, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks; Attn: Fire

Management Plan; Three Rivers, California 93271 (telephone (559) 565-3164 or email seki_fire@nps.gov).

The official responsible for approval is the Regional Director, Pacific West Region, National Park Service. The official responsible for implementation is Michael J. Tollefson, Superintendent, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. The draft fire management plan and environmental document are expected to be available for public review in January, 2000. At this time it is anticipated that the final plan and environmental document are to be completed in June, 2000.

Dated: February 16, 1999.

John J. Reynolds,

Regional Director, Pacific West.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Record of Decision; Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement; Oregon Caves National Monument, Oregon

ACTION: Notice of Approval of Record of Decision.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR 1505.2), the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, has prepared a Record of Decision on the Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement for Oregon Caves National Monument in Oregon.

DATES: The Record of Decision was recommended by the Superintendent of Oregon Caves National Monument, concurred by the Deputy Regional Director, Pacific West Region, and approved by the Regional Director, Pacific West Region, on December 23, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Inquiries regarding the Record of Decision or the Environmental Impact Statement should be submitted to the Superintendent, Oregon Caves National Monument, 19000 Caves Highway, Cave Junction, OR 97523, phone (541) 592-2100.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The text of the Record of Decision follows:

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS), has prepared this Record of Decision (ROD) on the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the General Management Plan for Oregon Caves