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February 8, 2010

Forest Service Planning NOI
c/o Bear West Company
172 E 500 Street
Bountiful, Utah 84010

RE: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the National Forest System Land Management Planning Rule

To Whom It May Concern:

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors welcomes the opportunity to participate in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the United States Forest Service's land management planning rule, whose purpose is to guide land managers in developing, amending, and revising land management plans for national forests and grasslands in the National Forest System (NFS). There can be no better means to achieve this goal than for local governments to provide a prominent role in the development of the national forest plans. While in the process of crafting the new rule and conducting the environmental evaluation in the EIS, we respectfully request consideration of the following comments.

As noted in Section 219, Purposes and Principals of the 1982 Forest Planning Rule, the United States Forest Service (USFS) was required to:

- Coordinate with the land and resource planning efforts of other Federal agencies, State and local governments, and Indian tribes.
- Implement the planning coordination activities within the Forest Service and with local, State and other Federal agencies.
- Consider the objectives of other Federal, State and local governments, and Indians tribes, as expressed in their plans and policies and coordinate with other public planning efforts.
- Use of a systematic, interdisciplinary approach to ensure coordination and integration of planning activities for multiple-use management.

In our opinion, more recently adopted planning rules have not adequately protected the inclusion of local government agencies when preparing a national forest plan. The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors believes forest plans should be consistent with local land use

plans, and the USFS should solicit and incorporate the views of local government prior to the release of a proposed plan. And, where a forest plan may not be made consistent with the local plan, the EIS should justify why it cannot and should evaluate the potential social, economic, and environmental implications of any alternatives that do not provide effective coordination with local government. We acknowledge there are interests in federal lands beyond those of El Dorado County, but also recognize the local populace should participate in forest plans that directly affect them and be given the right to influence theirs and the forest's future.

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors therefore requests the United States Forest Service provide a strong collaborative process in the new land management planning rule, with the objective of providing local government an effective voice in planning for the national forests. With collaboration we can obtain the ultimate goal to restore and sustain healthy forests while maintaining the use of public lands and supporting vibrant communities.

Sincerely,

Supervisor Norma Santiago, Chair
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors