

# A RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES

## ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

The BLM has developed several possible scenarios for how the King Range NCA could be managed over the next 20 years. These scenarios will serve as the framework for developing the alternatives that will be presented in the Draft Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement this fall.

Each of these scenarios takes a different approach to achieving the vision for the future of the King Range NCA expressed during scoping. The BLM planning team will identify a preferred alternative from the scenarios that best addresses the issues while meeting applicable policies and laws, protecting environmental quality, and fulfilling the King Range NCA vision. This preferred alternative could consist of components of several of the management scenarios. For example, it might incorporate fuel management actions from scenario B and fishery habitat restoration actions from scenario C. A public comment period on the draft Plan will give you the opportunity to tell the BLM which mix of management goals and actions you feel will best guide future management of the King Range. Please contact the BLM Arcata Office if you have suggestions about these preliminary management scenarios.



### SCENARIO A - NO ACTION

(Continue current management)

This would essentially continue current management activities and policies. The "No Action" alternative must be analyzed in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.



### SCENARIO B

Low Resource Restoration/Use and Limited Recreation Use

In this scenario, public use would be managed to provide maximum opportunities for solitude and primitive-type experiences. A comprehensive visitor use allocation system would be developed to limit Backcountry Zone visitors to low numbers and provide high levels of opportunity for solitude. Few if any additional facilities would be added, and the existing trail network would be maintained but not extended. Road maintenance standards would be reduced on several routes so that they become four-wheel drive trails. Ecological processes would

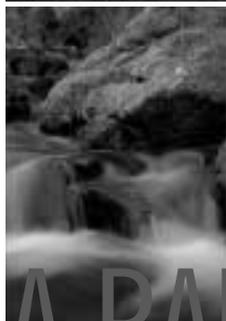
be allowed to continue in existing habitats with little direct management action to restore or improve natural resource conditions. As a result, BLM would scale back some of its planned restoration efforts, such as the Mattole Estuary and in-stream habitat enhancement programs. Personal collection permits, but not commercial permits, would be issued for special forest products like mushrooms, beargrass, floral trade species, and fuelwood. Fire would be allowed to burn naturally in the Backcountry and Frontcountry Zones, unless it threatens private property. The fuel break system would be maintained, but there would be no other management actions to reduce fuel loads.



## SCENARIO C

### Moderate Resource Restoration/Use and Moderate Recreation Use

Scenario C would provide a greater diversity of uses and a more varied approach to management. A comprehensive visitor use allocation system would be developed for the backcountry to allow a moderate number of visitors and provide moderate opportunities for solitude. Additional efforts would be made to protect sensitive species such as migratory birds, and to increase nesting habitat for northern spotted owls to maintain 20 breeding pairs throughout the King Range. Silviculture treatments such as thinning would be employed to speed up restoration of previously harvested forest stands to a more natural species composition and age mix and to reduce fuel loading. Commercial and personal special forest product collection permits would be issued for public lands in the Frontcountry and Residential Zones, with the number depending on the availability of the resource and maintenance of sustainable populations. Management actions such as localized prescribed burns in a designated "Native American Beargrass Collection Unit" could be pursued in coordination with local tribes. Full suppression of all fires within the Frontcountry and Residential Zones would be supported, while in the Backcountry Zone BLM would manage fuels for variable intensity wildfires to create a landscape resistant to damages associated with large, high intensity fires. (As always, BLM would support the suppression of fires that may threaten adjacent private property.) Some new trails, such as an easy-grade interpretive trail at Hidden Valley would be created in the Backcountry to facilitate access by a wide range of users. Horse-friendly trails would also be identified and upgraded for equestrian use. A mountain bike road/trail system would be expanded for the Frontcountry Zone. BLM would develop a group use area for weddings, memorials, picnics, etc. at or near Mal Coombs Park in Shelter Cove. Sites for additional vehicle and horse trailer parking near the Black Sands Beach parking lot would be explored.



## SCENARIO D

### Active Resource Restoration/Use and Higher Recreation Use

This scenario would focus on active management and maximizing use while maintaining and enhancing resource conditions. This scenario includes the greatest application of management tools and actions. It also provides for fewer opportunities for solitude while allowing the most numbers and types of recreation visitors. This alternative includes a more active approach to surveying cultural and historic sites, as well as developing National Register of Historic Places nominations for King Range Historic and Prehistoric Archaeological Districts. BLM would continue current efforts to restore and maintain the ecological health of sensitive wildlife, watersheds and aquatic ecosystems, but would go further by developing new standards, guidelines, and interpretive programs. Native anadromous fishery restoration efforts would be implemented in all major watersheds within the NCA through up-slope stream sediment reduction, in-stream habitat enhancement, riparian silviculture, and monitoring. More active invasive plant eradication efforts would be pursued, and alternate management tools such as prescribed burns would be used to restore a mosaic of different habitats, such as the diminishing coastal prairies in the northern part of the NCA. BLM would also utilize silvicultural treatments to restore structural diversity and enriched species composition to second-growth forests in the Frontcountry Zone, encouraging or accelerating late-successional characteristics where possible. The existing fuel break system would be augmented using prescribed burns. Improvements in the Backcountry Zone could include additional campsites, springs for potable water, bear-proof food storage systems, and rustic low-maintenance toilets at popular sites. Additional trails would be created and rustic interpretive signs installed at major camping areas. In the Frontcountry Zone, trails, trailhead parking, and campgrounds could be expanded and a new trailhead developed at Bear Creek. In addition to Horse Mountain and Mattole Campground upgrades, overlook picnic sites at scenic vistas could be provided.

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