

**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management**  
**Proposed Permanent Closure of Recreational Shooting Area**

**Q. What are the specific locations that are proposed for permanent closure to target shooting?**

- A. The area proposed for permanent closure to target shooting is located in the Aguanga Valley, south State Route 79:
- BLM (Township 9 South, Range 1 East, sections 2,11,12 SBBM) Aguanga Valley/High Point Road;
  - U.S. Forest Service would permanently close a three mile section (0.5 mile on both sides of the road) of the High Point Road (8S05) and Oak Grove Road (9S09) up to the junction of Palomar Divide Road (9S07) (Township 9 South, Range 1 East within portions of sections 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 24, and 25 SBBM).

A map of the area proposed for permanent closure is available on the Cleveland National Forest website at [www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland) and at the BLM website at [www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/](http://www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/) . In addition, maps will be distributed at local U.S. Forest Service and BLM offices.

**Q. Why is the area being permanently closed to target shooting?**

- A. The area is being proposed for permanent closure because of public safety concerns from recreational shooting. There is a danger to the public from bullets that can travel upwards of two miles or more into the surrounding communities.

Due to development of private homes around the shooting area, a safe shooting distance no longer exists. Bullets are traveling in all directions for upwards of two miles or more. As a result, private homes and property in surrounding communities have been hit with stray and ricocheting bullets. In addition, State Route 79 corridor lies within the bullet trajectory area from the shooting locations.

**Q. If the area is so unsafe, why haven't you proposed to close it before now?**

- A. The area was closed to target shooting on May 7, 2004 under a temporary emergency closure order. The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management took action to implement the emergency closure for public health and safety. It was evident that the number of recreational shooters had dramatically increased making it unsafe. In addition, there had been a dramatic increase in recreational shooters traveling from as far away as Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange, and San Bernardino counties. These factors coupled with increased traffic on State Route 79 contribute to making the shooting area unsafe.

**Q. How did the shooting area become an issue?**

- A. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) had been notified by concerned residents whose property and homes have been hit with stray and ricocheting bullets.

**Q Why can't a change in shooting direction resolve the safety problems?**

- A. A 360 - degree safe zone for shooting does not exist in the area.

**Q. Can you do anything to make the area safe for shooting?**

- A. The BLM and U.S. Forest Service have reviewed the area and have determined that this location is no longer a safe area for this type of recreational shooting because of the area's proximity to residential development, lack of natural backstops, and insufficient buffer zones.

**Q. Will this area be reopened at any time?**

- A. The BLM and the Cleveland National Forest are proposing a permanent safety closure to target shooting. Environmental analysis has been completed by both agencies and is available for public review on the websites listed above.

**Q. How can I comment on the proposed closure action?**

**A.** Comments must be mailed to the following address:

San Diego Project Manager  
Bureau of Land Management

**Or**

NEPA Coordinator  
Cleveland National Forest

**At**

Cleveland National Forest  
Supervisor's Office  
10845 Rancho Bernardo Rd. #200  
San Diego, CA 92127

**Q. How much time do I have to comment on the proposed action?**

**A.** The official 30 day comment period begins on October 11, 2006, with the posting of a legal notice in the San Diego *Union Tribune*. Public comments on the environmental assessments are due 30 calendar days from the date the legal notice is published in the San Diego *Union-Tribune*. The publication date is the exclusive means for calculating the beginning of the comment period. Persons who provide comments are responsible for submitting them to the addresses above before the end of the comment period. All comments must be received at the address listed above by November 9, 2006.

**Q. Are there any other locations that we can go to shoot?**

**A.** For information on shooting areas on BLM public lands contact the California Desert District Office at (909) 697-5200. The Orosco Ridge shooting area on the Cleveland National Forest is scheduled to be reopened. For more information on the site, contact the Palomar Ranger District at (760) 788-0250.

Palomar Divide Road Area from the beginning of the national forest boundary on Palomar Divide Road (9S07) - which is located near mile marker 42 on State Route 79 - up to the junction of Oak Grove Road (9S09) and Palomar Divide Road (9S07) (in Section 25, Township 9 South, Range 1 East near High Point lookout) remains open to recreational shooting. The Cleveland National Forest will monitor the use in this area.

The following website provides a list of various locations to target shoot in southern California:

[http://www.socalcamping.com/shooting/shoot\\_info.html](http://www.socalcamping.com/shooting/shoot_info.html)

**Q. Would the proposed permanent closure of the area to target shooting affect hunting on the National Forest or Bureau of Land Management lands?**

**A.** No. Hunting is allowed on National Forest System lands as well as BLM lands under current State Department of Fish and Game guidelines. For additional information on hunting contact your local Department of Fish and Game office. Also, contact the local district office of BLM or U.S. Forest Service offices for possible restrictions during hunting seasons.

**Q. Under the proposed permanent closure are other uses going to be restricted.**

**A.** No. Hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, driving on existing roads and other recreational activities would still be allowed in the area. The proposed permanent safety closure would only affect recreational target shooting.

**Q. How will the public be notified when the final decision is made?**

**A.** The Cleveland National Forest website [www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland) and the BLM website [www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/](http://www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/) will post information on the decision once public comments have been reviewed and analyzed. If you have questions regarding the environmental documents contact: Pete Gomben at (858) 674-2959 or Janaye Byergo at (858) 451-1767.