

## 14. RECREATION

### 14.1 Affected Environment/Environmental Setting

#### 14.1.1 Regional Setting

This section describes the regional setting for outdoor recreation on JDSF from several perspectives: The North Coast region, Mendocino County, and the Redwood region of California. Details on recreation on JDSF itself and on adjacent and surrounding lands are found in section 14.1.4, below.

**North Coast Region:** Jackson Demonstration State Forest (JDSF) lies near the geographical center of the North Coast region of California (Marin, Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte Counties) (Map Figure A). JDSF is within a 3 to 4 hour drive from the San Francisco Bay Area (population approximately 7 million in the nine-county metropolitan area), about 2 to 2½ hours from Santa Rosa (population 154,500), and about 4 to 5 hours from Sacramento (population approximately 2.1 million in the six-county metropolitan area).<sup>1</sup> A large number of tourists from these urban areas visit the North Coast annually and recreate at the coastal beaches, parks, and towns. All told, millions of people from throughout the North Coast region, California, the U.S., and the world visit the North Coast annually to enjoy these treasures.

Within the North Coast region, there are over 56 state parks and beaches, encompassing nearly 40 miles of coastline and approximately 180,000 acres. An estimated 11 million people visit the state parks in the North Coast region each year (Department of Parks and Recreation 2003). State parks in the Mendocino District alone receive close to 3 million visitors per year (Department of Parks and Recreation 2003).

Federal parks also have a significant presence in the North Coast region. The region's Redwood National Park, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Point Reyes National Sea Shore, and Muir Woods National Monument had over 17 million visitors in 2003 on an area of 174,400 acres (<http://www2.nature.nps.gov/stats/>).

In addition, there are portions of two national forests (Six Rivers and Mendocino), and two federally designated wilderness areas (Yolla Bolly and Red Mountain) in the North Coast Region. The federal Bureau of Land Management is responsible for several tracts in the North Coast region, including the 60,000-acre King Range National Conservation Area (located along the "Lost Coast" area of southern Humboldt County) and the Headwaters Forest Reserve, a 7,400-acre old growth redwood preserve near Fortuna in Humboldt County.

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<sup>1</sup> Population information from 2003 California Statistical Abstract available on Internet at [http://www.dof.ca.gov/HTML/FS\\_DATA/STAT-ABS/Sa\\_home.htm](http://www.dof.ca.gov/HTML/FS_DATA/STAT-ABS/Sa_home.htm).

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Mendocino County:** Within Mendocino County alone, there are 22 state parks that encompass approximately 33,000 acres, much of which is redwood forest. These parks had over 3 million visitors in fiscal year 2001/02 (Department of Parks and Recreation 2003). JDSF, with 61,000 visitors annually, also is an important County tourist attraction, with the majority of visitors to JDSF living in or near the cities of Willits, Ukiah, Fort Bragg, and Mendocino. The Mendocino National Forest (176,000 acres in Mendocino County), US Bureau of Land Management lands (119,000 acres in Mendocino County), and Lake Mendocino Recreation Area (5,000 acres, administered by US Army Corps of Engineers) are other important outdoor recreation resources in the county.

**Redwood Region:** Given the limited distribution of coast redwood forest in California, the special beauty of these forests, and the important cultural role that redwood forest has in the state and indeed the world, redwood forest recreation is one of key recreation values provided by JDSF. JDSF is just one small part of the overall publicly owned coast redwood lands in the state. Most publicly owned coast redwood recreational lands are in parks, which have recreation and preservation as their predominant mission as compared with JDSF, which emphasizes forest management demonstration.

Generally limited to within 50 miles of the ocean, coast redwood forestland ranges from Monterey County, through the San Francisco Bay area, to the Oregon border. Within this region, there are approximately 352,000 acres of primarily redwood forest public lands in parks (state, county, regional, and municipal) and other public holdings, including JDSF. Table VII.14.1 illustrates the coast redwood forest public recreation facilities for the region. The vast majority of these lands is open to public recreation. Annual visitor use is about 8.4 million. JDSF accounts for about 14 percent of the redwood forest public lands in the redwood region and approximately 0.7 percent of the recreation visits to these lands.

In addition to JDSF, the 2,681-acre Soquel Demonstration State Forest in Santa Cruz County also is managed by CDF. Its mission is somewhat different than JDSF, in that its establishing statute gives timber production lesser emphasis and gives greater emphasis to watershed protection, environmental study, and environmental education (Public Resources Code § 4660 et seq.).

Looking at the North Coast region, there are an estimated 261,680 acres of publicly managed redwood forestland and annual visitor numbers are close to 5.5 million. JDSF represents about 19 percent of this area and just over 1 percent of the total visitors.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**Table VII.14.1. Summary Statistics for Coast Redwood Forest Public Parks and other Public Facilities.**

Area	Number of Redwood Parks, etc.	Acres	Percent of Redwood Range Acres	Percent of Region Acres	Number of Campsites	Miles of Trails	Annual Visitation	Percent of Redwood Range Visitation	Percent of Region Visitation
REDWOOD RANGE	71	351,958	100%		2,757	1,069	8,398,089	100%	
North Coast Region	38	261,680	74.3%	100%	1,764	660	5,478,317	65.2%	100%
Marin County	5	9,954	2.8%	3.8%	90	88	2,385,313	28.4%	43.5%
Sonoma County	5	6,892	2.0%	2.6%	97	48	246,148	2.9%	4.5%
Mendocino County	15	73,684	20.9%	28.2%	530	154	1,273,912	15.2%	23.3%
JDSF	1	48,652	13.8%	18.6%	25	18	61,000	0.7%	1.1%
Humboldt County	9	146,889	41.7%	56.1%	757	301	1,276,021	15.2%	23.3%
Del Norte County	3	24,261	6.9%	9.3%	290	69	296,923	3.5%	5.4%
San Francisco Bay Region	19	38,709	11.0%	100.0%	406	243	423,639	5.0%	100%
Central Coast Region	14	51,569	14.7%	100.0%	587	166	2,496,133	29.7%	100%
Santa Cruz County	7	41,049	11.7%	79.6%	335	129	1,856,379	22.1%	74.4%
Soquel Demonstration State Forest	1	2,681	0.8%	5.2%	0	8	10,000	0.1%	0.4%
Monterey County	6	10,520	3.0%	20.4%	252	37	639,754	7.6%	25.6%

Notes: San Francisco Bay Area includes Alameda, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and San Mateo Counties. Annual visitation numbers were not available for most Bay Area facilities. Acreage, number of campsites, miles of trails, and annual visitation numbers were not available for all facilities. Agencies use varying methods for compiling visitation statistics. While substantial efforts were made to be complete, some minor redwood forest public facilities may have been missed. Acreage totals include some non-redwood forest types.

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Redwood National Park comprises about 78,000 acres in Del Norte and Humboldt Counties and hosted over 400,000 visitors in 2003 (<http://www2.nature.nps.gov/stats/>). Major redwood state parks in the North Coast region include Del Norte Coast Redwoods (63,070 acres; 60,439 visitors in fiscal year 2001/02), Jedediah Smith Redwoods (9,891 acres; 194,666 visitors in 2001/02), Prairie Creek Redwoods (14,061 acres; 199,902 visitors in 2001/02), and Humboldt Redwoods (52,000 acres; 537,336 visitors in 2001/02) (Department of Parks and Recreation 2003).

Table VII.14.2 shows the fifteen largest redwood forest public recreation facilities in the state. Redwood National Park, at 78,000 acres, is the largest facility by far. JDSF is the third largest single facility. Two other “top fifteen” units are located in Mendocino County, Sinkyone Wilderness State Park and the Big River Unit of the Mendocino Headlands State Park.

**Table VII.14.2. Fifteen Largest Redwood Forest Public Recreation Facilities.**

<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>County Location</b>	<b>Size (Acres)</b>
Redwood National Park	Humboldt and Del Norte	78,077
Humboldt Redwoods State Park	Humboldt	52,000
JDSF	Mendocino	48,652
Big Basin Redwoods State Park	Santa Cruz	17,998
Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park	Humboldt	14,061
Forest of the Nisene Marks State Park	Santa Cruz	10,222
Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park	Del Norte	9,891
Pescadero Creek County Park	San Mateo	8,020
Sinkyone Wilderness State park	Mendocino	7,596
Headwaters Forest Reserve (BLM)	Humboldt	7,400
Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park	Del Norte	6,370
Big River Unit, Mendocino Headlands State Park	Mendocino	7,334
Mt. Tamalpais State Park	Marin	6,212
Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park	Monterey	4,762
Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park	Santa Cruz	4,316

In Mendocino County, there are 15 coast redwood forested parks and similar publicly owned facilities, including JDSF. These facilities total 73,684 acres and receive about 1.3 million visitors annually. JDSF's 48,652 acres account for 66 percent of this total area and its 61,000 annual visitors account for about 5 percent of the total visitors. The next largest redwood forest public facilities in Mendocino County are the 7,600-acre Sinkyone Wilderness State Park and the 7,300-acre Big River Unit of the Mendocino Headlands State Park. Annual visitation at Sinkyone is about 34,000. The Big River Unit is too new to have visitor statistics.

## **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Although JDSF provides a redwood forest recreation experience like many other public redwood forest areas found from Monterey County to the Oregon border, JDSF also offers some unique recreation opportunities. First, JDSF does not collect any fees for recreational uses. Additionally, because of its size, availability of roads, and recreation use policies, the JDSF is unlike the mostly smaller State Parks and other public redwood forest facilities, allowing a much wider range of dispersed recreational opportunities for horseback riding, mountain biking, and hunting. Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Policies specifically require that JDSF recreation facilities be rustic in character (BOF Policy 0351.5)

### **14.1.2 Jurisdictional Setting**

There are no designated wild, scenic, or recreational rivers on the JDSF in either the Federal or State Wild and Scenic Rivers programs.

Recreation on State Forests is governed by a series of specific regulations contained in the California Public Resources Code and California Code of Regulations, Chapter 9, Subchapter 1: Recreation. These code provisions are presented in "Appendix I" of the DFMP and are referenced below where appropriate. See also Appendix 5 of this EIR.

### **Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Policies**

The primary purpose of the State Forest program is to conduct innovative demonstrations, experiments, and education in forest management. Timber production is the primary land use on JDSF. Recreation is recognized as a secondary but compatible land use. (0351.2). Forest management is the handling of forest crop and forest soil so as to achieve maximum sustained production of high quality forest products while giving consideration to values relating to recreation and aesthetic enjoyment (Section 4639, Public Resources Code). Demonstrations and investigations are to balance a variety of uses, including recreation, with forest management (0351.3).

Additional policies that direct recreation management on JDSF are:

- The recreation program will make camping and day use facilities available to the general public, offer a degree of control and protection to the forests, and demonstrate that recreational use and timber management can be compatible land uses (0351.5).
- Campgrounds, picnic areas, and trails will be developed, as funds become available, but only consistent with the recreational carrying capacity as determined in the management plan (0351.5).
- Recreation improvements will generally be rustic in character with sanitary facilities and water sources which meet public health requirements. Special

## **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

attention should be given to maintaining safe and sanitary conditions in all recreation sites utilized by the public (0351.5).

- Recreation use will be integrated with timber management activities to demonstrate how these uses can be compatible. The presence of recreation on the State forests presents a unique opportunity to explain timber management to the general public (0351.5).
- The State forests will remain open for public hunting and fishing in accordance with State Fish and Game regulations except for specified closures required for public safety and forest protection as authorized by law (0351.5). Areas on the JDSF that are closed to hunting, trapping, and the use of firearms (CCR Chapter 9, Subchapter 1, Section 1435) include:
  - Approximately 3,000 acres surrounding the Mendocino Woodlands located south and east of the Little Lake Road, and south of Road 740.
  - Approximately 1,500 acres around Parlin Fork Conservation Camp area.
  - Approximately 1,020 acres around the Chamberlain Creek Conservation Camp area.
- Cooperate with the Department of Parks and Recreation in establishing forest management demonstration areas compatible with recreation for educational purposes adjacent to the Mendocino Woodlands Outdoor Center on Jackson State Forest (0351.3).

### **California Fish and Game Commission and Fish and Game Code**

The California Constitution (Article IV, Section 20) establishes the California Fish and Game Commission. The Commission is responsible for enacting regulations for the protection of fish and wildlife pursuant to the Fish and Game Code. Regulations are enforced by the California Department of Fish and Game. The Fish and Game Commission establishes hunting regulations, including hunting areas, hunting seasons, hunting hours, and caliber and type of firearms allowed within JDSF.

### **Mendocino Woodlands Outdoor Center Act (PRC § 5820.)**

The area around the existing Mendocino Woodlands State Park and Outdoor Center was originally deeded to the State of California from the United States for public park, recreational, and conservation purposes (PRC § 5822.). In 1977 the California Legislature identified the Mendocino Woodlands as especially well suited to serve primarily as an outdoor education center to enable the children of the state to better comprehend the outdoors, particularly the social and economic importance of the study, conservation, protection, and utilization of natural resources (PRC § 5821). The legislature transferred ownership of the Mendocino Woodlands Outdoor

## **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Center, consisting of approximately 720 acres, to the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) and identified the Mendocino Woodlands Special Treatment Area within the Jackson State Forest, consisting of approximately 2,550 acres (PRC § 5823).

The legislature also directed that prior to authorizing the sale and cutting of timber from the Mendocino Woodlands Special Treatment Area, the State Forester shall solicit and consider the recommendations of the Department of Parks and Recreation with respect to the prevention of unnecessary or unreasonable interruption or loss of facilities or resources essential to operations of the Outdoor Center (PRC § 5829).

### **CDF-Mendocino Woodlands State Park and Outdoor Center Memorandum of Understanding**

In 2000, CDF and State Parks entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) related to forest management practices surrounding the Mendocino Woodlands. This MOU includes provisions for:

- Protection of the Mendocino Woodlands water collection systems to ensure the integrity and purpose of the systems;
- Consideration for CDF to actively manage a large portion of the Special Treatment Area in order to accelerate recruitment of late-seral habitat;
- Maintenance of Roads 700, 720, and 730;
- Use of Mendocino Woodlands roads by CDF; and
- A 200-foot harvest exclusion buffer for camp areas, recreational cabins, or main roads located within the lands administered by State Parks. This buffer does not apply to the Railroad Gulch Silvicultural Study area.

The MOU is to be reviewed during the first quarter of each year and can be terminated by either party upon 30 days notice.

### **California Recreational Trails Act (PRC §§ 5070-5077.8)**

The California Recreational Trails Act directs all State agencies and departments whose operations are affected by, or related to, the goals, policies, and proposals of the California Recreational Trails System Plan to utilize the plan as a guide in their operations (PRC § 5072.7).

Heritage Corridors are one component of the California Recreational Trails System Plan that was established by the California legislature and is administered by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Heritage Corridors are regional,

## **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

state, or nationwide alignments of historical, natural, or conservation education significance, with roads, state and other parks, greenways, or parallel recreational trails. Heritage Corridors are intended to have guidebooks, signs, and other features to enable self-guiding tourism and environmental conservation education along most of its length and to have all or some of the facilities open to the public along its length. Emphasis is on facilities whose physical and interpretive accessibility meet whole-access goals.

The Tahoe Pacific/Farms & Forests State Heritage Corridor is identified as an alternate portion of the Transcontinental Scenic Heritage Corridor, to extend from Fort Bragg to the Pacific Crest along Highway 20. (PRC § 5077.5 (a) (2)). The California Department of Parks and Recreation has not yet formulated specific plans for interpretive or user facilities for the part of the Heritage Corridor passing through JDSF, and it is not specifically addressed in the text of the California Recreational Trails Plan (Department of Parks and Recreation 2002).

### **Mendocino County General Plan**

The following trail routes are identified in the Coastal Element of the Mendocino County General Plan and designated on the Mendocino County Trails Plan:

- Fern Creek Road–Caspar Orchard Road Inland Trail–East of Caspar, from Highway 1 east along County Road 410, then southeasterly along County Road 411A into JDSF.
- Caspar-Little Lake Road (Road 409) Inland Trail–South of Caspar, from Highway 1 southeasterly to its intersection with Little Lake Road (County Road 408) and connecting to the to Little Lake-Sherwood Inland Trail.

The General Plan also encourages the California Department of Parks and Recreation to develop a hiking and equestrian trail from: Caspar Beach to Jackson State Forest, and from Jug Handle State Reserve to Jackson State Forest.

## **14.2 Existing Recreation on JDSF**

### **Recreation Use**

JDSF does not have controlled entry points, nor are any recreation fees collected. Thus, it is difficult to accurately estimate annual visitor usage. In the past 10 years, average use has not been quantified other than by tracking the annual camping days per year. In 1999, there were over 12,200 visitor days of use by campers who typically stay for two to four days. In the past 10-year period, overnight-use has averaged 16,000 visitor days per year. Easy access from Fort Bragg, Mendocino and Willits allows for extensive day use. It is estimated by CDF that day use is



## **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

about four times that of overnight use, making total use about 61,000 visits per year.

A recreational use survey of adjacent landowners was conducted in 1988. The findings of this study show that 25 percent of the respondents visit JDSF for the purpose of environmental education, with the majority of respondents (50 percent) visiting JDSF to observe nature. The survey also confirmed that Mendocino County residents comprise the majority of visitors to the Forest and that visitors value the fact that access and camping is free on the Forest.

JDSF does not collect any fees for recreational uses. Additionally, because of its size, availability of roads, and recreation use policies, the JDSF is unlike the surrounding smaller State Parks, allowing a much wider range of dispersed recreational opportunities for horseback riding, mountain biking, and hunting.

Recreation use numbers are relatively lower for JDSF than for State Parks in the area for several reasons. First, JDSF is not directly accessible from State Highway 1, the route most commonly used by tourists to the area. There are no signs on Highway 1 that would direct motorists to the Forest. Since recreation is a secondary mission at JDSF, only modest efforts are made to inform the tourist public about its recreation opportunities. Also, the recreation facilities at JDSF are relatively rustic, as compared to State Parks. Campers in particular are demanding increasingly developed facilities with amenities such as running water, firewood, RV hookups, and hot showers. The Department of Parks and Recreation recently announced that they will provide wireless Internet access at 85 parks throughout the state, including Van Damme and MacKerricher in Mendocino County. Further, JDSF does not have the striking physical features that make many State Parks popular tourist destinations. Given the nature of the rustic, dispersed recreation at JDSF, its recreation opportunities are more comparable to those offered by National Forests than State or National Parks.

### **General Access Conditions**

With the exception of the two Conservation Camps on the JDSF and temporary area closures during active timber operations, nearly all of the 48,652-acre forest is open to public access. During the wet winter months, many roads are closed to vehicular access, but remain open to non-motorized recreation.

### **Recreation Activities**

Recreational opportunities found on Jackson Demonstration State Forest are unique to the coastal region. They are informal, free of charge, generally unsupervised, and diverse. Primary recreational activities occurring on JDSF include vehicular and hike-in camping, picnicking, hiking, biking, equestrian activities, environmental education, hunting, and shooting.

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Target shooting occurs as a dispersed activity across the ownership. Though formal shooting ranges have not been developed, unsanctioned shooting sites have been created by users, particularly at abandoned quarry sites of the JDSF. The discharge of any firearm, air or gas weapon, or bow and arrow within 150 yards of any designated camping area on the JDSF is prohibited (CCR Chapter 9, Subchapter 1, Section 1413) as is the discharge of firearms within 500 yards of any occupied residences and their appurtenant structures. (Mendocino County Ordinance, Chapter 8.04).

Though prohibited by State law (CCR Chapter 9, Subchapter 1, Section 1431), substantial off-road motor vehicle usage occurs. Most of this use is related to access from rural residential neighborhoods.

### **Developed Recreation Facilities**

Pursuant to CDF's management objectives, developed campgrounds and picnic areas are primitive, with limited development, pit toilets, and no running water. Appendix VII of the DFMP presents a complete listing of developed facilities. Developed use facilities are located in areas that are adjacent or near to Highway 20 along the North Fork of the Big River (east end) of the South Fork of the Noyo River (west end). These are the primary visitor-use areas on the JDSF, both historically and currently.

**Campgrounds:** There are a series of designated campgrounds within the boundaries of JDSF. Most developed sites have an outhouse, picnic table, trashcan, and barbecue or fire ring. No potable water is available. Some of the campgrounds have outhouses and picnic tables that are accessible to the disabled. Most of the campgrounds offer opportunities for swimming or wading. A total of 65 campsites in 21 campgrounds, 20 seasonal and one open year-round, exist at JDSF. The campgrounds are:

- West-end: Camp One (w/ Camp host), Roundhouse, South Fork 1, 2, and 3, Red Tail, Southbend, Wagon, Tilley (Group Camp), Trillium, Tin Can, Teacher's, Poison Oak, Camp 4, Camp 6 (hike-in use), Bob's Woods, and Camp 8.
- East end: Dunlap (w/ Camp host), Horse Camp (equestrian use), Big River Camp, and Indian Springs (hike-in only).

CDF issues permits for the campsites, but does not charge for camping. There are signs along Highway 20 for Big River and Dunlap Camps.

**Day-Use Facilities:** CDF maintains three day use areas in the JDSF: the Camp 20 Recreation Area and Dogwood Picnic Area along Highway 20; and the Camp One picnic area on Road 350.

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Camp 20 Recreation Area includes a vault toilet, pay phone, picnic tables, and ample room for parking of cars and heavy trucks. The Camp 20 Recreation Area also includes a displayed donkey engine once used by the Caspar Lumber Company and interpretive displays about the JDSF. There are two standing historic buildings at Camp 20. These are the Little Red Schoolhouse and the Cat Barn. In 1989, it was determined by CDF that maintenance or restoration of the Cat Barn was not feasible. A large number of people utilize Camp 20 as a highway rest stop, or to make phone calls from the phone booth. However, CDF does not have an estimate of this utilization and these uses are not included in the annual visitation estimate.

The Camp One picnic area is suitable for large group gatherings and includes an interpretive display explaining the Department of Fish & Game's Egg Collection Station.

The Dogwood Picnic Area is located along Highway 20 at post-mile 18.6 along the North Fork of Big River. There is one picnic table overlooking the river at this location.

**Staging Areas:** One equestrian staging area is provided adjacent to the CDF Station, off Little Lake Road. Other than the camps and day use areas, no formal staging areas to access the Forest's trail system are provided. There are ample opportunities for individuals or small groups to park off of the main forest roads for non-motorized recreational trail access.

### Roads and Trails

The trail system on the Forest varies from designated self-guided interpretive trails and developed hiking trails to skid trails and logging roads, both old and new. CDF estimates that there are approximately 350 miles of actively-used roads on the Forest, with another 150 miles of abandoned roads. Many of these routes are not mapped. Virtually all of these roads are used for non-motorized recreation including hiking, biking, and horse riding. Illegal off-road motor vehicle recreation use is commonplace, particularly in the western portions of the JDSF.

Many of the active Forest roads are seasonally closed to use by CDF to prevent erosion. Many are open only during the dry summer months. Roads are also used for scenic driving and for hunting access. Thousands of travelers pass through JDSF annually along Highway 20, County Road 408, Road 500, and Road 700. County Road 408 is often used as an alternative route when Highway 20 is blocked. The route is not well signed from Highway 20 to Mendocino (or Caspar).

The JDSF recognizes and manages about 16 miles of developed hiking trails. These include: the Chamberlain Creek Demonstration Trail; trails located along the

## **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

South Fork Noyo River and North Fork of the South Fork of the Noyo River; and the Forest History Trail near the Mendocino Woodlands State Park and Outdoor Center.

Another two to three miles of trails serve the outdoor education program at the Mendocino Woodlands, including the Manly Gulch Trail, Fern Loop Trail, Eagle's Roost Trail, Old Jeep Trail, Marsh Creek Trail, and Big Tree Trail.

Four designated recreational hiking trails are located in JDSF: Camp One Loop, Trestle, Waterfall Grove, and Woods Trail. These trails are primarily limited to foot traffic travel although other non-motorized uses are not restricted.

The Sherwood Trail, once a County trail route designed for equestrian use, is located in the western portion of the JDSF and continues towards Willits across private property. Much of the Sherwood Trail is coincidental with forest roads and trails. The majority of the trail route on the Forest is maintained through normal road and trail maintenance by JDSF with the southerly most section in the vicinity of Russian Gulch maintained by volunteer groups. The County of Mendocino has discontinued its involvement with this trail route, and its continued existence is due primarily to the efforts of the Northern California Trails Council.

Several of the roads and trails within JDSF are utilized extensively by bicyclists. Use of bicycles is generally permitted on all forest roads and most of the hiking trails. The most extensive use for riding tends to occur on roads that are either seasonally or permanently closed to public automobile traffic, making them somewhat safer and more attractive for bicycle use. Within the Forest, it is relatively easy to create circular routes of various distances by riding on a series of connected roadways. A local bicycle club periodically conducts voluntary trail maintenance on the Forest, in an effort to maintain effective erosion control and an environment free of refuse.

### **Special Events**

Several special events occur each year on the JDSF requiring specific contracts for using the Forest. These include weekly equestrian trail rides, an annual Enduro equestrian race, and an annual Skunk Train bicycle ride.

### **Other Public Uses**

Other than recreational use, JDSF is utilized extensively by the public for a number of activities, including: firewood cutting, collection of minor wood products (e.g. poles, split products), and collection of greenery. JDSF represents a significant public resource for mushroom collection as is evidenced by use from universities and mushroom societies from the Bay Area.

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Permits are required for collection of any forest products from JDSF. Periodically, the State Forest manager establishes permit prices, volume or numerical limits, and conditions of collection for the various minor forest products collected by the public.

Substantial casual, but unquantified, recreational use of the JDSF occurs by residential neighbors on the west end of the Forest for walking, jogging, walking their dogs, and horseback riding. In some instances unsanctioned trails have been developed for this use.

### 14.2.1 Carrying Capacity

As called for in Board policy, the DFMP includes a determination of recreational carrying capacity for the purpose of guiding development of campgrounds, picnic areas, and trails. Three types of carrying capacity are calculated for each of the recreation use categories: maximum physical carrying capacity, current sustainable carrying capacity, and potential future sustainable carrying capacity. These values are presented in Table VII.14.3.

**TABLE VII.14.3. Recreational Carrying Capacities.**

<b>Recreation Use</b>	<b>Maximum Physical</b>	<b>Current Sustainable</b>	<b>Potential Sustainable</b>
Campgrounds (camper-days)	120,296	24,059	30,074
Picnic areas (picnic-days)	45,260	9,052	11,315
Trails (hiker-days)	186,880	81,030	162,060

The DFMP suggests that JDSF could accommodate a 25% increase in campground and picnic capacity and a doubling of hiking trail capacity without severely impacting the Forest's recreation program resources. In any case, given that recreation is secondary to demonstration and research at JDSF, and that outdoor recreation opportunities abound on other public lands in Mendocino County and the North Coast region, maximization of recreation opportunities on JDSF is neither appropriate by mission nor warranted by limited supply.

### 14.2.2 Existing Recreation on Adjacent and Surrounding Lands

The Mendocino coast is a popular Northern California recreation destination, and there are numerous state parks, beaches, and reserves in close proximity to JDSF. The Mendocino Woodlands State Park, Russian Gulch State Park, and the recently established Big River Unit of the Mendocino Headlands State Park all abut JDSF. A portion of Jughandle State Reserve is located within JDSF by agreement between CDF and the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

- The Mendocino Woodlands State Park and Outdoor Center (Mendocino Woodlands): The Mendocino Woodlands is located about 7 miles inland from the Town of Mendocino. It is sited around the Little North Fork of the Big River and is almost

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

completely surrounded by JDSF. The Mendocino Woodlands was originally granted to CDF from the United States Department of the Interior, but ownership was transferred to the State Parks in 1977. In doing so, the California Legislature identified the Mendocino Woodlands as especially well suited to serve as an outdoor education center. The Mendocino Woodlands is managed by the Mendocino Woodlands Camp Association, a non-profit corporation. In 1997, the Mendocino Woodlands was designated as a National Historic Landmark (Program Ref: NHL-9700126).

Vehicular access to the Mendocino Woodlands is through JDSF lands via Road 408 (Little Lake Road) and Road 700. Mendocino County maintains Road 408. State Parks, through an MOU with JDSF, maintains Road 700. Road 720 provides an alternate access route to Road 700. In its current condition, it is subject to seasonal closures and is not as direct.

The 720-acre Mendocino Woodlands facility is designed to accommodate groups of 30-200 people, and includes developed facilities such as cabins, dining halls with kitchens, and showers. Its primary use season begins in April and extends through October. The facility is generally operating at full capacity from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend (personal communication: Don Taylor, Mendocino Woodlands Association).

- Jughandle State Reserve. The primary feature of this 769-acre park is a 2.5-mile nature trail exploring the ancient marine terraces typical of the Mendocino coast area. Jughandle State Reserve is located off Highway 1, about halfway between Mendocino and Fort Bragg, and receives about 70,000 visitors a year. The eastern end of the park abuts JDSF.
- Russian Gulch State Park. This park, about 2 miles north of Mendocino, offers both coastal and inland recreation activities. Inland, there are several miles of hiking trails and a 3-mile paved biking trail in the heavily forested Russian Gulch Creek Canyon. The eastern end of the park abuts JDSF. An equestrian staging area is located along Road 409 just at the JDSF boundary and is sometimes used to access the trails on the JDSF. It is estimated that about 92,000 people a year visit Russian Gulch State Park.
- In 2002, approximately 7,400 acres of forest and estuary adjacent to JDSF was purchased and incorporated into the Big River Unit of the Mendocino Headlands State Park, located in the lower Big River area. This new park unit abuts the southern edge of the western-most portion of JDSF. Previous to its acquisition by the department of Parks and Recreation, this area was largely managed as industrial timberland. This addition to the California State Park system links diverse coastal and inland habitats. Studies and plans for the restoration, development, and management of this unit are currently underway. The Department of Parks and Recreation released the draft Big River Interim Management Plan for a one-month public review period on February 14, 2005. CDF will review and comment on this draft plan. When the plan is finalized by

## **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

the Department of Parks and Recreation, CDF will carefully consider its guidance when managing portions of the Forest adjacent to the park unit.

Several other state parks, including Mendocino Headlands State Park, Caspar Headlands State Beach, MacKerricher State Park, and Van Damme State Park, are also nearby along the Mendocino coast. The park facilities host uses similar to those described above, focusing on access to beaches and interior forest areas.

The Skunk Train, a historical rail line and popular tourist attraction, runs between Fort Bragg and Willits, primarily along the banks of the main stem of the Noyo River. JDSF lands are generally located beyond the viewshed from the railroad, being primarily southward of the main ridgeline dividing the Noyo River from the South Fork Noyo River and the Big River watershed.

### **Regulatory Framework**

Evaluation of potential impacts to recreation resources involves consideration of Federal, State and local regulations, standards and policies. Actions resulting from implementation of the Forest Management Plan may be subject to one or more of the following standards relating to protection of recreation resources.

**California Recreational Trails Act (California Public Resources Code §§ 5070-5077.8).** Requires the State DPR to prepare and continuously maintain, a comprehensive plan for the development and operation of a statewide system of recreation trails, including heritage corridors. This plan is to include standards and criteria to be followed by the State Department of Parks and Recreation and other participating public agencies in providing facilities such as overnight camps, hostels, rest areas, access points, corrals, launching ramps, staging areas, and parking areas to complement trail routes and area.

The California Recreational Trails Plan (Department of Parks and Recreation 2002) in itself has no direct effect on management of JDSF, although it provides an opportunity for the Forest's research, recreation, and education programs to participate in a more far-reaching project. Until the DPR develops specific plans for the portion of the Tahoe Pacific/Farms & Forests State Heritage Corridor that passes through JDSF, the actual types of facilities and improvements, if any, and their potential environmental effects are unknown.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).** Provides ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG).

**California Building Code.** Establishes design requirements for outdoor education facilities, classrooms, and trails.

### 14.3 Proposed JDSF Management Measures

#### 14.3.1 Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives of the DFMP that involve recreation resources are:

**Goal #2--Timber Management:** Manage the forest on the sustained yield principle consistent with environmental constraints related to watershed, wildlife, fisheries, and aesthetic and recreational enjoyment.

**Objectives:** Manage forest stands to produce sustained yields of high quality timber products and public trust resources\Maintain flexibility in forest management in order to provide a comprehensive demonstration, education and research program.

**Goal #5--Recreation and Aesthetic Enjoyment:** Plan for and provide low impact recreational opportunities that are compatible with forest management objectives and healthy ecological processes, and that are consistent with historic recreational use characteristics.

#### **Objectives:**

- Base the development of future recreation programs and facilities on a plan that assesses needs, opportunities and available resources.
- Maintain campgrounds, picnic areas, trails and other recreational facilities in a safe, healthy and attractive condition.
- Continue to utilize a style of recreational improvement that is generally low impact and rustic in nature. Develop campground and day use areas so that they are concentrated in identified recreation corridors.
- Demonstrate that recreation and timber management are compatible land uses through the integration of recreational development and use with timber harvest activities. Utilize this opportunity to explain forest management to the recreating public. Include appropriate mitigations in harvest plans that may impact recreation and aesthetic values.
- During timber management activities conducted adjacent to residential areas, consider and mitigate the project's effects on the casual and informal recreational uses of the State Forest by the Forest's neighbors.
- In cooperation with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, establish forest management demonstration areas compatible with recreation for educational purposes adjacent to the Mendocino Woodlands Outdoor Center and the Pygmy Forest Reserve.



## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 14.3.2 Specific Management Actions

To implement these goals and objectives, the DFMP identifies limited proposals for the enhancement of recreation resources. The emphasis of the DFMP is to maintain the status quo, a rustic outdoor recreational experience, with some expansion of the trail system.

Specific management actions that are proposed in the DFMP that would increase recreation access and use are:

- Improving Camp Host sites.
- Improving individual campsites with native vegetation where necessary to enhance privacy and reduce compaction. Vehicle parking areas will be rocked to limit vehicle travel within each campsite.
- Improving each campground with a functional fire/barbecue pit, picnic table and vault toilet.
- Restoring the historic Little Red Schoolhouse located at Camp 20. Hours of operation will be determined based on the public's interest and availability of volunteers to assist in staffing the building
- Upgrading road surfaces on heavily-used recreational roads in order to limit erosion, protect water quality and provide safe driving conditions.
- Maintaining and keeping up-to-date a map that includes recreational facilities, points of interest, and main access roads as well as general information concerning the Forest. This map would be available to the public without charge.
- Developing route maps for mountain biking and equestrian access.
- Treating day-use areas, campgrounds, and picnic areas as necessary to reduce fire hazards for safety and demonstration purposes.
- Maintaining major roads and trails in the Forest to provide access for fire protection purposes.
- Provide a system of road signing.

Two major facility developments are proposed that will likely increase recreation use of the JDSF. These are:

- A Forest Learning Center to include lodging, conference center, classrooms, a resource and research library, research lab, video conferencing, and administrative offices; and
- A JDSF Interpretive Center to be developed in conjunction with the Forestry Learning Center.

A barracks facility associated with the Learning Center has been constructed and is in use, primarily by agency personnel and visiting students and researchers. As discussed below, other recreation facilities may be proposed and developed following the completion of a user survey.

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 14.3.3 Other Management Actions

The DFMP directs that a recreation survey and needs assessment will be conducted to help guide future changes to the existing recreation resources on the JDSF. The DFMP also identifies a number of broad management parameters to be used in the planning and development of new recreation facilities, the management of recreation resources, and the planning and management of other forest programs. Particular attention is given to timber harvests and road decommissioning, as those activities would affect the availability and quality of recreation resources. For the latter types of activities, project-level CEQA assessment or the equivalent will typically need to be conducted before the project can commence. These project level assessments (such as a timber harvesting plan) will in most cases be “tiered” to this EIR. Other key management activities are described below.

**Recreation Surveys:** The DFMP proposes a two-step planning approach to future recreation improvements beyond maintaining the status quo and implementing the proposals described in Section 3.16.3.3 of the DFMP. The first step is to conduct recreation surveys during the planning period, the results of which will guide future recreation development and management proposals. The DFMP states that the Department would implement visitor-use and countywide surveys that might include current users, (both individuals and special interest groups), county residents, forest neighbors, and other California residents. The surveys also are intended to document interest for utilizing the Forest for special events that, in turn, would bring additional revenue and visibility to the area.

The second step is to use the results of the user survey to identify specific recreation management actions to be undertaken. These would include both specific recreation improvements and management actions, such as defining Recreation Corridors, which would influence management of the Forest’s resources in a way that gives consideration to values associated with recreation.

**Timber Harvesting:** The most common management activity expected to occur near recreational facilities with potential to impact the recreational experience is timber harvest. Timber harvest normally occurs pursuant to an impacts assessment conducted in preparation of a timber harvesting plan (THP). The THP process is the functional equivalent to the EIR process, and includes a multidisciplinary agency review process and public review. Since the site-specific management actions and effects cannot be pre-determined at this time with any degree of certainty, it is preferable to conduct the environmental assessment and to design specific mitigation while each project is planned, designed, and reviewed. The assessment associated with a THP includes consideration of cumulative effects within an assessment area designated by the registered professional forester who prepares each plan. THP-level environmental assessment on JDSF will tier to this EIR.

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Recreation Facilities Improvement:** Future recreational improvements, when involving potentially substantial construction and/or disturbance effects, would require an assessment of impacts, and would be subject to the provisions of CEQA and other applicable law. While the extent and location of future recreational facilities improvements and additions are not known at this time, there may be potential for construction to impact local fish, wildlife, and watershed resources. By the same token, there is potential for increased recreational activity associated with a new trail or campground to impact wildlife resources due to an increase in human activity. Provisions of existing law require that an assessment of potential incremental and cumulative impacts be conducted when potentially damaging activities are anticipated. Project-level CEQA assessments for recreation facility projects will tier to this EIR.

**Recreation Corridor:** The Recreation Corridor concept involves designating special areas in the Forest to integrate the JDSF recreation program with timber management, resource protection, demonstration and education about forest management practices, and the neighboring community. Within a recreation corridor, other forest management activities such as timber harvesting should give strong consideration to values associated with recreation. In the DFMP, explicit definitions of the Recreation Corridor concept are deferred until the Recreation Use Survey has been completed. The DFMP, however, does identify current and potential practices relating to Recreation Corridors. These include:

- Incorporation of a 300-foot buffer area around campgrounds and day use areas.
- Limiting active timber operations within the vicinity of occupied campgrounds and picnic areas to weekdays and non-holidays.
- Including noise abatement mitigation in any timber sale within 1,000 feet of an open campground for timber operations occurring between July 1 and Labor Day.

Timber harvesting options that are identified in the DFMP as potentially appropriate and that could be implemented in areas that are designated Recreation Corridors include:

- single tree selection, hazard tree removal, or no harvesting
- restricting the timing of timber operations to avoid conflicts with high visitor-use weekends; or
- restricting operating hours to minimize noise pollution

Other recreation facilities such as trails and roads used for recreation are addressed in the DFMP by their inclusion in the Road and Trail Corridor Special Concern Area.

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Slash Abatement:** The DFMP identifies that current management practices involve a slash abatement zone within 50 feet of “main access routes to high-use recreation areas.” These routes coincide with road and trail corridors identified on “Figure 5: Special Concern Areas” in the DFMP.

**Road Decommissioning:** The Road Management Plan within the DFMP addresses the active decommissioning of roads. The Road Management Plan states that “roads on JDSF that are no longer required for management and recreation purposes will be evaluated for proactive abandonment.” The Management Plan also includes provisions that should any riparian roads be formally decommissioned, “an attempt will be made to incorporate riding and hiking trails into their former locations, or to relocate the trails to nearby areas so that loss of recreational opportunity does not occur,” thus maintaining or expanding the streamside trail network. Project-level CEQA assessments will typically be required for road decommissioning projects. Such assessments will tier to this EIR.

**Trails within Timber Harvest Area:** The DFMP states that major trails within timber harvest areas are to be closed prior to harvest, and reopened upon completion of such harvest. Non-sanctioned trails that are located such that they are damaging to the environment will not be reopened.

**Trail Expansion:** Additional designated trails that will be considered include: a loop trail for linking the Trestle Trail to Indian Springs (a hike-in campsite); a trail linking various parts of the Forest; an access trail designed for those with disabilities; and a trail through the Upper James Creek Grove. During the planning period, expansion of the system will be implemented only to the extent that staffing and funding allow. Top priority will be given to loop trail segments that have proximity to campgrounds, watering locations, and other areas with easy access.

**Camping:** The decision to reopen historically-used camping areas throughout the Forest that are now closed will be based on the results of the user survey and staff resources, as well as heritage resource impacts and other environmental sensitivities.

**Mendocino Woodlands Special Treatment Area:** JDSF will seek joint efforts with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Mendocino Woodlands Association to manage the area adjacent to the Mendocino Woodlands Outdoor Center for educational and recreational purposes.

**Other Adjacent State Park Units:** JDSF will seek joint efforts with the Department of Parks and Recreation for management of adjacent areas in complementary ways. These efforts may include collaboration in planning activities, improving recreation opportunities, enhancing public education, exploring habitat protection and restoration opportunities, and other activities.

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

**Boundary Line Adjustments and Trades:** Potential property boundary changes that are identified in the DFMP include Three Chop Ridge (between Big River and Noyo River), and various locations along the southern boundary of the Forest. This ownership adjustment would provide the State with control of a significantly shorter and safer route than Road 200 for passenger and log truck traffic between the main Noyo River drainage, the San Francisco Boys and Girls Club, Camp Noyo Boy Scouts Camp, and Highway 20. Most of this traffic currently uses Forest Road 200, which the DFMP identifies as a candidate for decommissioning due to its somewhat hazardous, inner gorge location that could be potentially damaging to the environment.

### 14.4 Thresholds of Significance

Recreation impacts are determined by assessing how the different alternatives support recreation opportunities and the quality of those opportunities, and how the level of recreational activity supported by the various alternatives may impact other resources. Recreation opportunities include the facilities provided on JDSF (e.g., campgrounds, trails) and access to those facilities. The quality of the recreation experience is generally defined in terms of aesthetic effects such as how management activities like timber harvesting may or may not interfere with the enjoyment of recreation opportunities. Section VI-2 (Aesthetics) describes the impacts of the DFMP and its alternatives on the quality of the visitor's experience.

Program impacts of the DFMP would be considered significant if:

- Implementation of the DFMP would contradict existing State or local policies about recreation resources.
- Existing JDSF recreation facilities, including roads and/or trails used for recreation, would be substantially eliminated based on management actions defined in the DFMP.
- Other forest resources were to be impacted by the placement and construction of recreational facilities, or by the increase in human activity associated with new or improved facilities.

Based on guidance provided by CEQA (Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21001 and the CEQA Guidelines), an impact of the DFMP on recreation would be considered significant if it:

- Increases use of existing parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.
- Includes recreational facilities or requires the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

## 14.5 Impacts

The DFMP does not directly propose to reduce or eliminate any existing recreation opportunities on the JDSF. The JDSF will remain open to public recreation with seasonal and area restrictions consistent with past forest management practices. There are no new restrictions or limits proposed in the DFMP to dispersed recreation use on the Forest. There will likely be no significant increases in the use of existing parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of those facilities would occur or be accelerated. Only modest improvements to existing facilities are proposed, and future expansion of recreational facilities is speculative and intended to proceed only after a user-needs survey is conducted and any required CEQA analysis performed.

As discussed previously, the DFMP includes limited new recreational facilities during the planning period and the potential to construct an interpretive center and learning center, which would be subject to environmental review when the design, location and funding is more certain. The impacts of new recreational facilities are considered as part of the project description and assessed in the appropriate resource specific analysis sections of this report.

**Impact 1: *The recreation programs outlined in the DFMP are not consistent with State or local recreation policies.* (No Impact)**

The DFMP does not address the Tahoe Pacific/Farms & Forests State Heritage Corridor along Highway 20 or other trail routes identified in the Coastal Element of the Mendocino County General Plan. However, these are general, conceptual proposals at this time, and no proposals within the DFMP would preclude implementation of these concepts. Similar circumstances apply to all alternatives considered here.

**Mitigation:** None required.

**Impact 2a: *Existing use of the JDSF roads and trails for recreation would be substantially reduced or eliminated if roads and trails are not maintained, if roads and trails are abandoned, or sanctioned trails are not reconstructed after a timber harvest operation.* (Less Than Significant)**

Dispersed recreation on the JDSF relies upon sanctioned interpretive and hiking trails, skid trails, and logging roads, both old and new. The DFMP identifies two scenarios where trails could potentially be closed to public non-motorized use, or eliminated.

First, the DFMP states that major trails within timber harvest areas “are to be examined prior to harvest, and reopened upon completion with the exception of non-sanctioned trails in locations that are damaging to the environment.”

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Second, through formal road decommissioning as defined in the Road Management Plan, it is estimated in the DFMP that such road decommissioning would involve between 50 and 100 miles of roads, or between 10% and 20% of the roads within the JDSF. Until completion of the road inventory portion of the Road Management Plan, it is not possible to determine the extent of impact that road decommissioning may have on dispersed recreation activities. As stated in the DFMP, decommissioning of roads in riparian areas will specifically involve a goal of retaining or relocating affected trail routes.

A related action identified in the DFMP and one mentioned during public scoping that would indirectly influence the decommissioning of Road 200 is a property boundary change involving Three Chop Ridge. Road 200 provides access to the Waterfall Grove Trail, one of the most popular recreation destination points in the JDSF.

Alternative C2 is similar to the DFMP (alternative C1) and would have the same potential for environmental impacts. No timber harvest would be conducted under alternative A, so no reconstruction of trails in harvest areas would be needed. Under alternatives B, C2, D, E, and F, sanctioned trails in harvest areas would be reconstructed after harvest. Under alternatives D, E, and F, harvest levels are substantially lower and recreation has greater emphasis than under alternatives B, C1, and C2, thus there would be lower likelihood for harvesting to cause significant adverse impacts to trail-based recreation. Alternative D specifically calls for mitigating harvests to address recreation and for increasing the priority of recreation when planning harvests.

Neither alternative A nor B includes a Road Management Plan. Alternative A does not contemplate decommissioning roads. Alternative B would decommission some roads in conjunction with timber operations. Alternatives C2, D, and E are similar to alternative C1 with respect to the Road Management Plan. Alternative F puts a higher priority on implementing the Road Management Plan and achieving its goals over a shorter period of time. All alternatives are assumed to have a goal of retaining or relocating trail routes affected by road decommissioning.

Under alternative A, only a minimal level of road and trail maintenance would be provided. Roads and trails are more likely to be closed for longer periods of time due to poor condition under this alternative than any other alternative. Such closures could decrease recreation opportunities as compared to the other six alternatives, which would provide higher levels of road and trail maintenance than alternative A. While not resulting in an individually significant adverse impact, there is a potential for a significant adverse cumulative impact (see Impact 2b, below).

Given these considerations, a less than significant individual impact is found for all of the alternatives considered in this EIR.

**Mitigation:** None required.

**Impact 2b: Cumulatively over time, use of the JDSF roads and trails for recreation would be substantially reduced or eliminated if roads and trails are not maintained, if roads and trails are abandoned, or sanctioned trails are not reconstructed after a timber harvest operation. (Less than Significant)**

Impact 2a, above, provides a detailed discussion of the measures that would be in place under all seven alternatives to prevent individual impacts regarding reduction or elimination of roads and trails. Based on these measures, no significant adverse cumulative impact potential exists except for alternative A.

Under the minimal level of road and trail maintenance under alternative A, there is a potential for increasing levels of road and trail closures over time, resulting in a significant adverse impact to road and trail recreational opportunities. The potential significant cumulative adverse impacts identified for alternative A could be mitigated through increasing the level of maintenance provided to roads and trails.

In addition to Impacts 1, 2a, and 2b, a number of issues were raised during the public Scoping process about potential recreation impacts not included in the above analysis. These are described below.

**Impact 3: A lack of public information jeopardizes the public's health and safety. (Less than Significant With Incorporation of Mitigation)**

A concern raised during public Scoping was that current forest management practices and the DFMP do not include programs for notifying the public about closures and/or avoiding conflicts between timber harvest operations, hunting, and other recreation uses that may jeopardize the public's health and safety. Though there are limited areas of the JDSF closed to hunting, these areas are not necessarily signed and may create conflicts between hunters and other forest visitors. Like the DFMP (alternative C1), EIR alternatives A, B, E, and F do not address this issue, either. Alternatives C2 and D call for increased signage associated with timber operations and other closures and restrictions, thus addressing this issue without the need for further mitigation (i.e., potential impacts are found to be less than significant).

**Mitigation 1.** For public safety, post and maintain signs around all areas closed to public access for timber operations that includes information defining the period of closure. In order to avoid conflicts between recreation uses and for public safety, post and maintain appropriate signs around all areas closed to hunting, trapping, and the use of firearms. Signs should be posted at all points where roads and trails enter such areas and, in the case of hunting restrictions, at legally required intervals along the perimeter of such areas.

**Monitoring 1.**

Timing: During the life of the JDSF Management Plan



## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Scope: Forest-wide

Implementation: the Department

Monitoring Responsibility: the Department

### **Impact 4: *The DFMP precludes some year-round motorized access throughout the JDSF and, hence, recreation opportunities such as hunting.* (Beneficial Effect)**

A specific request voiced during public Scoping included maintaining year-round motorized access for hunting and off-highway vehicle use. State Forest regulations prohibit cross-country travel by motorized vehicles. Motorized vehicles must utilize roads and parking areas constructed for vehicle use, and not utilize roads that are gated, shut, or posted as closed. Selected roads are closed to motor-vehicle access during the winter months to minimize impacts of vehicular use on easily eroded soils and water quality. These roads are open during the winter months to non-motorized access for a variety of recreation activities, including hunting as permitted by State Fish and Game code. Alternatives C1 (DFMP), C2, D, and F call for surfacing high-use recreational roads, which could reduce road closures and increase recreation access during winter months. These actions would result in a beneficial effect on year-round motorized access.

Alternatives A, B, and E do not address improving year-round motorized access. It must be recognized that improving access is a request for additional recreational opportunities beyond those currently existing. It is not a changed condition resulting from the JDSF Management Plan or any of the alternatives. As such, there is no impact and no mitigation is required for these three alternatives that do not propose to improve access.

### **Impact 5: *The DFMP does not provide specific opportunities for recreational target shooting.* (No Impact)**

The DFMP recognizes target shooting as a recreation activity in the JDSF, but neither condones nor forbids it except in areas posted or restricted by County or State rules. Formal shooting areas or “ranges” for recreational shooters are not proposed in the DFMP due to concern regarding potential for impacts resulting from concentrated shooting activity, including noise, public safety, and toxic materials (lead) accumulation concerns. This is a request for additional recreational opportunities beyond those currently existing. It is not a changed condition resulting from the JDSF Management Plan. As such, no mitigation is required. This situation applies to all seven EIR alternatives.

### **Impact 6: *The DFMP will create individual or cumulative impacts associated with construction and use of new or expanded recreational improvements.* (Less than Significant)**

## **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The DFMP proposes to increase the level of environmental protection associated with existing recreational facilities. Only modest improvements to the recreational system are suggested, these are generally to enhance environmental conditions and to improve recreation opportunities, and these are not planned to occur until after a recreation user-needs survey is conducted. New user-need surveys will be conducted periodically to update available information on user needs. Any subsequent construction and use of additional facilities is considered speculative at this time, and would require a CEQA analysis of potential incremental and cumulative effects at the time actual facilities are planned. No significant individual or cumulative adverse impacts would result given these provisions. As such, no mitigation is required at this time for alternative C1.

Under alternative A, there would be no expansion of recreational facilities over time. Under alternative B there would be only a low level of recreation facility development. Alternative C2 proposes the same approach as the DFMP (alternative C1). Under alternative E, low impact recreational opportunities would be expanded where they do not pose significant risk to fish and wildlife resources. Alternative F is similar to C1, plus it contains additional considerations for certain potentially sensitive recreation resources. Based on these considerations, no significant individual or cumulative adverse impacts are anticipated for alternatives A, B, C2, E, or F.

Alternative D calls for increased emphasis on recreation including development of new and improved trails. This expansion of recreational facilities might require mitigation to ensure that impacts remain less than significant. However, any subsequent construction and use of additional facilities is considered speculative at this time, and would require a CEQA analysis of potential incremental and cumulative effects at the time actual facilities are planned. As such, no mitigation is required at this time.

### **14.6 Cumulative Impacts**

Section 14.5 discussed the potential for specific recreation-related potential cumulative impacts in Impacts 2a and 6. This section provides a general discussion of recreation-related potential cumulative impacts.

The DFMP calls for compliance with Board of Forestry policies regarding recreational improvements. Recreational facilities generally will be maintained to provide a rustic and informal experience. A defined recreational corridor will be established, the width of which is to be determined by aesthetic considerations from points of concern (DFMP pages 76-7).<sup>2</sup>

A defined 300-foot wide recreation corridor has been established around campgrounds and day-use areas by the plan, and mitigation provided to increase the level of

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<sup>2</sup> Page references to the DFMP refer to the electronic version (PDF) posted at the Board's website: [http://www.bof.fire.ca.gov/pdfs/jdsf\\_mgtplan\\_master%203b.pdf](http://www.bof.fire.ca.gov/pdfs/jdsf_mgtplan_master%203b.pdf).

## **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

protection beyond that specified by the existing management plan. Future needs of the recreation program will be determined by implementing user and county-wide surveys at least every planning period. Once the user survey has been completed, the Recreation Corridor will be defined explicitly where possible to provide for integrating the Recreation program with timber management, resource protection, demonstration and education, and the neighboring community. If the recreational plan is determined to represent a significant change in management, the amended plan will be presented to the Board for review and approval.

Currently planned recreational program management provides for an increase in the level of environmental protection over that which currently exists. For example, native vegetation may be planted where necessary to provide an increase in privacy and a decrease in the level of soil compaction associated with use of the facilities. Regular maintenance will be provided, and heavily used access roads will be surfaced with rock to reduce erosion and sedimentation, and to reduce road closures (and, hence, increase recreation access) during wet months.

Future additions and major improvements to recreation facilities are speculative at this time. As such, an assessment (tiered to the program EIR for the DFMP) of cumulative effects associated with future improvements or additions should be conducted at such time as the user-survey is complete and preliminary plans are in place.

Given the current level of recreational activities on JDSF, the minimal level of additional activities anticipated under the DFMP, the protections included in the DFMP, and the additional CEQA review that will take place for any new recreation facilities on JDSF, we find that the DFMP's potential cumulative impacts on recreation will be less than significant. Through the improvement of roads over time, such as the road surfacing discussed above and the implementation of the Road Management Plan, there will be a long-term improvement in all-season recreational access, resulting in a beneficial cumulative effect. Similar outcomes would result for alternatives C1, C2, D, E, and F. Alternative B also would have a similar outcome, except that it does not explicitly provide for road improvements that could increase recreational access in wet weather conditions.

Other than the potential cumulative impact discussed under Impact 2b, above, alternative A, with its minimal management provisions, would not result in a significant adverse cumulative effect on recreation opportunities.

### **14.7 Alternatives Comparison**

A summary comparison of recreation impacts among the various alternatives is presented in Table VII.14.4.

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Table VII.14.4. Comparison of Recreation Related Impacts Among the Various Alternatives.						
Alternatives						Discussion
Impact*	1	2	3	4	5	*Impact Levels: (1) Beneficial (2) No Impact (3) Less than Significant (4) Less than Significant After Mitigation (5) Significant–Mitigation Not Feasible
Impact 1. The recreation programs outlined in the DFMP are not consistent with State or local recreation policies.						
Alt. A						The Tahoe Pacific/Farms & Forests State Heritage Corridor along Highway 20 or other trail routes identified in the Coastal Element of the Mendocino County General Plan. However, these are general, conceptual proposals at this time, and no proposals within the DFMP would preclude implementation of these concepts, nor would any of the other alternatives
Alt. B						
Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP						
Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan						
Alt. D						
Alt. E						
Alt. F						
Impact 2a. Existing use of the JDSF roads and trails for recreation would be substantially reduced or eliminated if roads and trails are not maintained, if roads and trails are abandoned, or if sanctioned trails are not reconstructed after a timber harvest operation.						
Alt. A						No Road Management Plan in place and no decommissioning of roads planned. Roads could face increased closure due to lack of maintenance.
Alt. B						No Road Management Plan in place. Some roads could be decommissioned and new roads constructed in the course of timber operations.
Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP						Road decommissioning would involve between 50 and 100 miles of roads, or between 10% and 20% of the roads within the JDSF. Abandonment of roads in riparian areas will specifically involve a goal of retaining or relocating affected trail routes.
Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan						
Alt. D						
Alt. E						
Alt. F						Similar to alternatives C1-E; though this alternative puts a higher priority on implementing the Road Management Plan and achieving its goals over a shorter period of time.

# DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Table VII.14.4. Comparison of Recreation Related Impacts Among the Various Alternatives.						
Alternatives					Discussion	
Impact*	1	2	3	4	5	*Impact Levels: (1) Beneficial (2) No Impact (3) Less than Significant (4) Less than Significant after Mitigation (5) Significant–Mitigation Not Feasible
<b>Impact 2b: Cumulatively over time, use of the JDSF roads and trails for recreation would be substantially reduced or eliminated if roads and trails are not maintained, if roads and trails are abandoned, or sanctioned trails are not reconstructed after a timber harvest operation.</b>						
Alt. A						No Road Management Plan in place and no decommissioning of roads planned. Roads, trails, and campsites could face increased increasing levels of closure due to lack of maintenance, eventually resulting in a significant reduction in recreation opportunities. Impacts could be mitigated to less than significant by increasing the level of maintenance of these facilities.
Alt. B						No Road Management Plan in place. Some roads could be decommissioned and other new roads could be constructed in the course of timber operations. Similar levels of trails as are available today would be maintained over time.
Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP						Road decommissioning would involve between 50 and 100 miles of roads, or between 10% and 20% of the roads within the JDSF. Abandonment of roads in riparian areas will specifically involve a goal of retaining or relocating affected trail routes.
Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan						
Alt. D						
Alt. E						
Alt. F						
<b>Impact 3. A lack of public information jeopardizes the public's health and safety.</b>						
Alt. A						These alternatives involve minimal to modest levels of recreation management. Potential impacts to public health and safety can be mitigated by the installation and maintenance of signs at road and trail entrances to timber harvest areas where called for in the alternatives and around all areas excluded from hunting.
Alt. B						
Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP						
Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan						These alternatives involve modest levels of recreation management. They protect public health and safety by calling for the installation and maintenance of signs at road and trail entrances to timber harvest areas and around all areas excluded from hunting.
Alt. D						
Alt. E						These alternatives involve modest levels of recreation management. Potential impacts to public health and safety can be mitigated by the installation and maintenance of signs at road and trail entrances to timber harvest areas where called for in the alternatives and around all areas excluded from hunting.
Alt. F						

# DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN

Table VII.14.4. Comparison of Recreation Related Impacts Among the Various Alternatives.						
Alternatives						Discussion
Impact*	1	2	3	4	5	*Impact Levels: (1) Beneficial (2) No Impact (3) Less than Significant (4) Less than Significant after Mitigation (5) Significant–Mitigation Not Feasible
Impact 4: The DFMP precludes some year-round motorized access throughout the JDSF and, hence, recreation opportunities such as hunting.						
Alt. A						State Forest regulations prohibit cross-country travel by motorized vehicles. Motorized vehicles must utilize roads and parking areas constructed for vehicle use, and not utilize roads that are gated, shut, or posted as closed. Selected roads are open to non-motorized access during winter months. This is a request for additional recreational opportunities beyond those currently existing. It is not a changed condition resulting from the JDSF Management Plan. As such, no mitigation is required. Alternatives C1, C2, D, and F propose to surface roads to improve recreation access; which would be beneficial relative to current access conditions. Alternatives A, B, and E do not propose to either worsen or improve year-round access, and therefore have no impact.
Alt. B						
Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP						
Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan						
Alt. D						
Alt. E						
Alt. F						
Impact 5: The DFMP does not provide specific opportunities for recreational target shooting.						
Alt. A						Formal shooting areas or “ranges” for recreational shooters are not proposed in the DFMP due to concern regarding potential for impacts resulting from concentrated shooting activity, including noise and public safety concerns. This is a request for additional recreational opportunities beyond those currently existing. It is not a changed condition resulting from the JDSF Management Plan. As such, there is no impact and no mitigation is required.
Alt. B						
Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP						
Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan						
Alt. D						
Alt. E						
Alt. F						

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED JDSF MANAGEMENT PLAN**

<b>Table VII.14.4. Comparison of Recreation Related Impacts Among the Various Alternatives.</b>						
<b>Alternatives</b>					<b>Discussion</b>	
<b>Impact*</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>*Impact Levels: (1) Beneficial (2) No Impact (3) Less than Significant</b> <b>(4) Less than Significant after Mitigation (5) Significant–Mitigation Not Feasible</b>
<b>Impact 6: The DFMP will create individual or cumulative impacts associated with construction and use of new or expanded recreational improvements.</b>						
<b>Alt. A</b>						Modest improvements possible after completion of a user-needs survey. Any future improvements to remain rustic in character. Environmental improvements to existing roads and facilities planned that will reduce present level of impact. After completion of user-needs survey, conduct tiered environmental assessment of plans for new or improved recreational facilities. Adverse cumulative impacts will be less than significant due to improvements in existing roads and facilities, periodic user surveys to better identify recreation needs, and conduct of additional environmental assessment, tiered to this EIR or a subsequent programmatic CEQA document, for new or substantially improved recreational facilities.
<b>Alt. B</b>						
<b>Alt. C1 May 2002 DFMP</b>						
<b>Alt. C2 Nov. 2002 Plan</b>						
<b>Alt. D</b>						
<b>Alt. E</b>						
<b>Alt. F</b>						