



An occasional feature of BLM California's News.bytes

Spotlight on Partners: Sierra Pacific Industries

BLM Coordination with Sierra Pacific Industries Leads to Improved Recreation Access

Ask Californians to describe Sierra Pacific Industries, and public land recreation probably wouldn't be part of their response. For northern California residents, however, a cooperative relationship between California's largest timber company and the Bureau of Land Management's Redding Field Office has meant improved public land access for pursuits ranging from hiking and horseback riding to off road motorcycle activities.

"Since completion of the Redding Resource Management Plan (the plan identifies lands suitable for disposal from public ownership, and acquisition for the public) in 1993, we have worked closely with Sierra Pacific to acquire about 14,000 acres for the public," said Steve Anderson, manager of the BLM Redding Field Office. "In exchange, Sierra Pacific acquired about 6,500 acres of public parcels, most of which were isolated and difficult to manage for public uses. These exchanges have helped the BLM increase recreation opportunities at a time when public demand is rapidly increasing. And they have helped Sierra Pacific better manage its existing timber holdings." (text continued below)



Some examples of public benefits from these transactions include:

The Iron Canyon Overlook

The BLM recently completed a trail leading to a dramatic overlook of the Sacramento River where it cuts dramatically through Iron Canyon in northern Tehama County, thanks to acquisition of 4,000 acres from SPI. The company purchased private parcels that were intermingled with public land in the Sacramento River Bend Outstanding Natural Area and then traded the parcels to the BLM for isolated public timberland parcels. The transaction provided new access to the land north of State Highway 36 near Red Bluff, clearing the way for projects including wildlife habitat improvement.

Interlakes Special Recreation Management Area

A land exchange with the timber company enabled the BLM to consolidate alternate "checkerboard" sections of land in a popular off-roading area of western Shasta County. Addition of the 9,000 acres to the recreation opened up legal access to even more riding areas. BLM also used the newly acquired lands provide alternate riding areas, improving natural resource protection.

Lower Clear Creek Restoration

SPI transferred more than 1,000 acres in the Lower Clear Creek Watershed to the BLM. Moving the land into public ownership was a critical for restoration projects that have resulted in a 400 percent increased in the fall run of Chinook salmon. The Lower Clear Creek Restoration Project, a decade-long undertaking of a consortium of public and private organizations, was recognized for excellence with the 2006 Governor's Economic and Environmental Leadership Award.

"The ongoing cooperative effort between the BLM and Sierra Pacific Industries is an example of how government and businesses can work together to improve recreational opportunities for northern California," said Mark Pawlicki, SPI's director of government affairs. He added, "We hope to continue this relationship and provide even greater environmental and recreational benefits for the region when opportunities arise."



- J. Fontana, 3/25/08

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