

APPENDIX 2

NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) February 2, 1999

CDF MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

PROJECT TITLE

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) Management Plan for Historic Buildings and Archaeological Sites

LEAD AGENCY

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF)

NOP RESPONSE PERIOD

The NOP response period will extend from February 3, 1999 through March 5, 1999.

INTRODUCTION

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), for CDF's proposed management plan for historic buildings and archaeological sites owned or managed by the CDF. CDF is the Lead Agency under CEQA for the proposed project. The purpose of the NOP is to inform all interested parties, and to request comments and guidance on the scope and content of environmental information to be included in the EIR.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

Long term planning and decision making is needed to guide the CDF in managing its extensive inventory of historic buildings and archaeological sites. As CDF's infrastructure ages, maintenance, remodeling, and abandonment of CDF facilities and buildings have been undertaken on a case-by-case basis. Adoption of a management plan would enable the CDF to focus its preservation efforts in an effective, orderly, and environmentally sensitive manner. In addition, Executive Order W-26-92 mandates all State agencies to prepare heritage resource management plans in consultation with the California State Office of Historic Preservation.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CDF has an extensive inventory of historic buildings, 78 of which have been identified as significant. In addition, CDF is also responsible for the protection and management of a large collection of archaeological and historical sites on State lands, most of which are located on the eight Demonstration State Forests managed by CDF. The CDF proposes to adopt a management plan to serve as the Department's guide for the preservation of its heritage resources.

The Department has prepared a Draft Plan entitled *Heritage Resource Management Plan for Significant Historic Buildings and Archaeological Sites Owned or Managed by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection* that outlines CDF's proposed plan of action to preserve and maintain its significant heritage resources. The Draft Plan proposes to implement a solid commitment by CDF to save 30 of its 78 significant historic buildings that were selected based upon management considerations. It focuses on buildings that are currently in use, are located on CDF owned sites and would not require significant increases in staff and support dollars to maintain. Ranger residences and apparatus buildings at occupied CDF compounds are well represented in the buildings to be saved. This plan would commit CDF to attempt to transfer management responsibility or ownership of an additional 21 significant buildings to another agency for preservation, and would identify the 27 remaining significant buildings that CDF cannot save.

The NOP is intended to request comments and guidance on the scope and content of environmental information to be included in the EIR. Responses to the NOP will assist the Lead Agency in developing reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures.

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed CDF management plan would cover historic buildings and archaeological sites located throughout the State of California. The following lists detail CDF's 165 known archaeological sites (Exhibit 1) and 78 significant historic buildings (Exhibit 2) that are discussed in the Draft Plan. The locations of these resources are identified on two maps of California (Exhibit 3 and Exhibit 4).

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 1995 CDF received funding to embark on an aggressive program to update and replace its aging infrastructure. With many of CDF's facilities constructed during the 1930's through 1950's, the buildings often fail to meet the Department's current operational needs. Deficiencies include failing water and wastewater systems, outdated communication facilities, apparatus buildings that can no longer accommodate today's larger engines, buildings subject to seismic risk due to structural instability, and entire facilities requiring relocation due to lease terminations and urban encroachment.

Additionally, changes have occurred in the way CDF conducts its firefighting mission. In the past there was a heavy reliance on mountain top fire lookouts to report fires. As the urban environment encroached on the state's wildlands, increasing numbers of people were present to report fires. The prevalence of cellular telephones has also increased the number of fires reported by the general public rather than fire lookouts. In addition, new tools such as lightning strike-reporting systems have further reduced the need for fire lookouts. As a result, only 36 of CDF's 73 fire lookouts are staffed during fire season. The other 37 fire lookouts are closed and no longer used for fire detection purposes. However, many fire lookouts, even some of the closed ones, provide telecommunications support by housing radio equipment, towers, and vaults. In some instances these abandoned fire lookouts have fallen into disrepair, and have become subject to vandalism and interfere with other uses for the site.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The Proposed Project would adopt the draft plan as currently written. This would result in a solid commitment by CDF to save 30 of its 78 significant historic buildings that were selected based upon management considerations. It focuses on buildings that are currently in use, are located on CDF owned sites and would not require significant increases in staff and support dollars to maintain. Ranger residences and apparatus buildings at occupied CDF compounds are well represented in the buildings to be saved.

This plan would also commit CDF to attempt to transfer management responsibility or ownership of an additional 21 significant buildings to another agency for preservation, and identifies the 27 remaining significant buildings that CDF cannot save.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES TO THE PLAN

The following proposed alternatives will be analyzed in the EIR:

Alternative 1 (Full Preservation)

This alternative considers the adoption of a management plan that calls for the preservation of all 78 of CDF's significant historic buildings. Preservation could take several forms: continued use and maintenance of buildings that meet CDF's operational needs; repair and maintenance of particularly significant buildings that are abandoned; or transfer of buildings that no longer meet CDF's needs to other entities that will ensure their preservation. CDF would not demolish any significant buildings under this alternative nor allow them to deteriorate. For those buildings situated on lands not owned or controlled by CDF (such as those on leased sites), preservation would also include programs to encourage and assist with preservation efforts by the landowner or controlling agency.

Alternative 2 (Representative Sample)

This alternative considers the adoption of a management plan that calls for the preservation of approximately 30 of CDF's 78 historic buildings, similar to the Proposed Project, however the selection would be a representative sample of the different architectural styles or building classes in CDF's historic building collection. This plan would include preservation of some of the rare buildings (such as those constructed of adobe bricks, rock-wall construction, oil houses, tank towers, etc.) include more lookouts and a wider variety of lookouts to be preserved than in the Proposed Project.

Alternative 3 (Lookouts Only)

This alternative considers the adoption of a management plan that calls for the preservation of 20 of CDF's lookouts but no commitment to preserve historic buildings at CDF forest fire stations or administrative sites. Historic buildings at those sites would be kept and maintained as long as they remain functional to CDF operations, but would eventually be replaced with modern buildings. There would be greater public or recreational benefit as more abandoned CDF lookouts could be restored and managed for public use. More opportunities would exist to create points of historical interest and forestry interpretation centers to those visiting lookouts in California's backwoods.

Alternative 4 (No Project)

This alternative would consist of CDF not adopting a statewide management plan for its historic buildings and archaeological sites. These resources would continue to be managed under existing policy as they have been managed in the past. Management of historical and archaeological sites would be on an individual project basis. Each of CDF's 78 significant historic buildings would remain as-is until an individual EIR was prepared for each future removal. This would result in a significant cost and the buildings would suffer without a clear plan and commitment to preserve some of them. Many would

continue to degrade through neglect and continue to expose CDF to liability by putting the public at risk at abandoned, unmanaged historic buildings. This alternative lacks the benefits of statewide coordination of management and lacks a commitment for CDF to preserve any of them. It would perpetuate slow decay management for many, and continue to put CDF at risk to liability. CDF would be in a position of non-compliance with Executive Order W-26-92 that mandates all state agencies to prepare heritage resource management plans in consultation with the California State Office of Historic Preservation.

LEAD AGENCY

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF)
P.O. Box 944246
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

COPIES OF THE DRAFT PLAN

Copies of the Draft Plan entitled *Heritage Resource Management Plan For Significant Historic Buildings And Archaeological Sites Owned Or Managed By The California Department Of Forestry And Fire Protection* may be requested by contacting:

María C. Sosa, Environmental Project Manager
(916) 322-3522

NOP RESPONSE PERIOD

The NOP response period will extend from February 3, 1999 through March 5, 1999. Please send your written response of the NOP to:

Department of General Services
Real Estate Services Division
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Sacramento, CA 95814
Attention: María C. Sosa, Environmental Project Manager
(916) 322-3522