FYI

From: Reta Laford [mailto:rlaford@fs.fed.us]
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2010 8:54 AM
To: Ruth Doyle
Cc: Debby Kriegel; Marcie Bidwell; tjchute@msn.com; Tom Furgason; Melinda D Roth; Beverley A Everson
Subject: Re: Rosemont EIS - VMS vs SMS - Need your input ASAP

I concur that the focus of the DEIS analysis should focus on SMS, as it is a better disclosure tool. However, we will still need to briefly address consistency with the Forest Plan VQO.

Reta Laford
Deputy Forest Supervisor
Coronado National Forest
Phone: 520-388-8307

Ruth Doyle/R3/USDAFS		To Debby Kriegel/R3/USDAFS@FSNOTES
		cc mbidwell@swca.com, Reta Laford/R3/USDAFS@FSNOTES, tjchute@msn.com
07/29/2010 01:00 PM		Subject Re: Rosemont EIS - VMS vs SMS - Need your input ASAP Link

Debby,

I concur with your rationale and recommend using the Scenery Management System for Rosemont EIS analysis. One of the reasons why the FS developed the system is to be more defensible in court. In the event the decision on this project is litigated, using SMS may provide for a stronger, more supportable scenery analysis.

Ruth Doyle
Regional Landscape Architect
Southwest Regional Office
505.842.3451
e-mail: rdoyle@fs.fed.us

Debby Kriegel/R3/USDAFS		To Reta Laford/R3/USDAFS@FSNOTES, tjchute@msn.com, Ruth Doyle/R3/USDAFS@FSNOTES
		cc Debby Kriegel/R3/USDAFS@FSNOTES, mbidwell@swca.com
07/29/2010 01:32 PM		Subject Rosemont EIS - VMS vs SMS - Need your input ASAP

SWCA has asked for written clarification (an email response should suffice) on whether to utilize the old Visual Management System (and VQOs) currently in our Forest Plan, or to use the Scenery Management System (SMS) for effects analysis for the Rosemont EIS. Although the systems have many similarities, the maps are different, and each system uses different terminology. We'd very much like to avoid 2 parallel analyses, one with each system.

The EIS will clearly state what is currently in the Forest Plan. However, VQO maps are broad-brush, forest-level mapping, and need refinement for project level work. And unfortunately, the VQO maps lack details for project-level work (e.g., there are no sensitivity level maps). I recommend that they use SMS for the project level analysis. Using SMS (and Scenic Integrity Objectives) will effect things like the "acres meeting objectives" chart, but probably not much (since few parts of Rosemont will meet any visual quality objectives). There may be other analysis pieces that will be different using SMS, but I don't see that as a major problem.

Rationale for using SMS, includes:
1. Since the mid 1990s, National Forests have been directed to use the SMS (Reynolds, 2380, August 22, 1994; McDougle, 2380, March 10, 1997; and Furnish, 1920/2380, June 11, 2001...I have copies of all 3 letters if you'd like to see them).
2. In 2001, Coronado National Forest completed its SMS inventory (and we have another letter from the Forest Supervisor at the time directing us to use SMS).
3. Forest Service Manual and Handbook directives both use exclusively SMS.
4. The revised forest plan will incorporate SMS, and the record of decision for the Forest Plan is expected to be completed in August 2011...which could easily be ahead of the Rosemont FEIS and decision.

I also suggest that the Rosemont EIS (or project record if that's more appropriate) includes a clear statement about the fact that the Forest Plan uses VMS, but for the Rosemont project analysis, SMS terms and process will be applied.

Please let me know if you agree with this rationale ASAP. SWCA needs an answer quickly because they are forging ahead with affects analysis.

Thanks!

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