

STANISLAUS NATIONAL FOREST
BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

PROJECT: Bear Valley Winter Sports Area Expansion
RANGER DISTRICT: Calaveras

PREPARED BY Aileen M. Palmer DATE 2/24/95
WILDLIFE/BOTANY OFFICER

This Biological Assessment/Evaluation meets the requirements of
FSM 2672.4 and provides for compliance with 36 CFR 219.19 and
241.1

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Cumulative Effects

On-going activities in the vicinity of the proposed ski area expansion include grazing, cross-country skiing, and summer recreation (including hiking, mountain biking, hunting, camping, and four-wheel-drive vehicular use on designated routes). All of these activities have impacts on the wildlife resource. Grazing and four-wheel-drive vehicular use can impact habitat for many wildlife species. Cross-country skiing and summer recreation increase the disturbance level. The cumulative impacts of the proposed ski area expansion plus these other activities on the habitat is minor compared to the impacts of these other activities alone. The cumulative impacts on the disturbance level are probably, however, more substantial.

The on-going activities mentioned in the previous paragraph have little effect on spotted owls that might be using the existing ski area and the areas proposed for expansion. Thus, there would be little increase in the effects of the proposed expansion due to cumulative effects from these other activities.

VIII. DETERMINATIONS

These determinations are based on the potential for adverse impacts as described under the Effects of the Alternatives section, the information known about species distribution and habitat requirements, and the amount of suitable and potential habitat located within the project area.

A. Federally listed species:

Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon: It is my determination that the Bear Valley Winter Sports Area Expansion will not affect these species. Nor will the actions affect these species' habitats. No informal or formal consultation with the U.S.D.I. Fish and Wildlife Service is required.

B. Sensitive species:

Allium tribracteatum, Silene invisa, Northern Goshawk, Great Gray Owl, California Spotted Owl, Willow Flycatcher, Pacific Fisher, Marten, Sierra Nevada Red Fox: It is my determination that the Bear Valley Winter Sports Area Expansion may affect individuals of these species but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing for these species.

C. Candidate Sensitive Species:

Wolverine, Sierra Nevada Snowshoe Hare, Greater Western Mastiff Bat, Townsend's Western Big-eared Bat, Spotted Bat, Mount Lyell Salamander, Mountain Yellow-legged Frog, Yosemite Toad: It is my determination that the Bear Valley Winter Sports Area Expansion may affect individuals of these species, but will not affect these species' viability.