



**ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER**, Governor  
**Lester A. Snow**, Secretary for Natural Resources

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## **Secretary for Natural Resources Lester Snow Announces Settlement to Ensure Protection for California's Roadless Areas**

*Governor Schwarzenegger Fought to Hold the U.S. Forest Service Accountable, Keeping 500,000 Acres of California's Roadless Areas Roadless*

**Sacramento** – California's forests will be protected from unnecessary road-building and the Forest Service must consult with state agencies under a U.S. District Court settlement announced today. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Secretary for Natural Resources Lester Snow, Attorney General Edmund G. Brown Jr. and a consortium of environmental groups reached the settlement after winning a U.S. District Court decision in September 2009. The settlement requires the Forest Service to consult with California agencies in development of forest management plans for four Southern California forests.

"A big part of the credit for this settlement should go to former Secretary for Natural Resources Mike Chrisman," said Secretary Snow. "The decision and settlement were successful thanks to the efforts of Gov. Schwarzenegger, the Attorney General and Governor-elect Jerry Brown, and all the plaintiffs, but also because of Mike's tireless commitment to protecting our forests. By working together, we've achieved our goal of helping to guide the forest management plans to ensure that California's national forests remain pristine."

"Once a road cuts through a forest, it's never the same," Attorney General and Governor-elect Brown said. "This agreement will preserve thousands of square miles of forested areas untouched by the hurly-burly of modern civilization."

The court found the Forest Service in violation of both the National Forest Management Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. Under terms of the settlement Forest Service management plans for the Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres and San Bernardino National Forests must incorporate California's interests. This includes; adhering to previously made written assurances, following an established process of working collaboratively with all parties, completing annual monitoring reports, conducting proper environmental analyses, identifying the potential impacts of roads, providing an accurate inventory of roads and trails, addressing the impact from increased oil drilling on habitat and wildlife, including the California Condor, and analyzing a reasonable range of alternatives.

The four Southern California forests represent more than 3.5 million acres of national forest lands. While much of these lands have wilderness designations, other protections or have already experienced various kinds of development, approximately one million acres are identified as roadless areas. Of that, about 500,000 acres would be protected in keeping with settlement and the state's roadless policy.

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Baldwin Hills Conservancy • California Bay-Delta Authority • California Coastal Commission • California Coastal Conservancy • California Conservation Corps • California Tahoe Conservancy  
Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy • Colorado River Board of California • Delta Protection Commission • Department of Boating & Waterways • Department of Conservation  
Department of Fish & Game • Department of Forestry & Fire Protection • Department of Parks & Recreation • Department of Water Resources • Energy Resources, Conservation & Development Commission  
Native American Heritage Commission • San Diego River Conservancy • San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission  
San Gabriel & Lower Los Angeles Rivers & Mountains Conservancy • San Joaquin River Conservancy  
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy • Sierra Nevada Conservancy • State Lands Commission • Wildlife Conservation Board



Plaintiffs who won the case in September 2009 include; the California Natural Resources Agency, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the California Attorney General, the Center for Biological Diversity, Los Padres Forestwatch, California Native Plant Society, Defenders of Wildlife, California Wilderness Coalition, the Wilderness Society, and the Sierra Club.

On Aug. 3, 2007, following the Forest Service denial of California's appeal of the four Southern California forest management plans, Governor Schwarzenegger wrote to then U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns, "Your recent denial is unacceptable and places the protection of valuable land in greater jeopardy. Frankly, it is not too much to ask for the Forest Service to do the right thing and live up to its own assurances," Governor Schwarzenegger wrote. "Please take the necessary action to ensure that California's forests are safeguarded for generations to come and resolve this important issue before any more time and resources are expended. The people of California deserve nothing less."

On Sept. 6, 2007, Secretary Johanns responded to the Governor's letter by asking that the state file a petition, "Please accept my personal assurance that, if the state submits a petition, the Department and the Forest Service will work diligently, cooperatively, and expeditiously with the State to find lasting protection for these inventoried roadless areas that is acceptable to the State of California." Shortly after, Johanns resigned, running successfully for a U.S. Senate seat.

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**For the settlement and related documents view:**

[http://www.resources.ca.gov/keeping\\_californias\\_roadless\\_areas\\_roadless.html](http://www.resources.ca.gov/keeping_californias_roadless_areas_roadless.html)