

## Planning - Add roads, trails and areas (FINAL)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Version # \_\_\_\_\_

APP # 700542

### A. Statement of Planning Objectives

The Sierra National Forest (SNF) is submitting a planning proposal to conduct environmental analysis to add roads, trails and areas to a designated system.

The SNF is located in Fresno, Madera and Mariposa Counties in the State of California. The SNF is bordered on the west by private property in the eastern foothills of the San Joaquin Valley, on the north by Yosemite National Park and Stanislaus National Forest, and on the east and south by Inyo National Forest, Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park and Sequoia National Forest.

The SNF is within a 1-hour drive from Madera or Fresno, a 3-hour drive from Stockton or Bakersfield, and a 6-hour drive from San Francisco or Los Angeles. The communities of Shaver Lake, Big Creek, North Fork, and Bass Lake are located within the SNF boundary. About 95,725 acres of private lands (such as Southern California Edison, Pacific Gas and Electric and residential areas) occur within the project area.

The SNF is in the process of releasing the decision to bring a number of unauthorized roads, trails and areas into the National Forest Transportation System (NFTS). The decision results in large areas previously used by motorized visitors that will no longer be available. Once the decision is implemented, the Forest will be closed to motorized cross-country travel. One result of this closure will be a loss of access to hundreds of dispersed parking areas greater than 30 feet from the road or accessed off an unauthorized route not brought forward in the EIS for analysis.

Public comment, received during the public participation process for the EIS, requested 994 unauthorized roads and trails from the GPS'ed inventory as well as 325 areas. The Forest Service reviewed 1,055 routes and 54 areas from the GPS'ed inventory and public input. This review resulted in the identification of 250 routes as existing system roads and trails; 284 unauthorized routes and 20 areas to be considered as additions to NFTS. The maximum alternative brings in 234 routes and 20 areas.

This project is to conduct environmental analysis on 180 unauthorized routes for 89 miles and 307 areas for 133 acres. The documents will include analysis of long and short term impacts of these opportunities on: aquatic and terrestrial wildlife; prehistoric and historic cultural resources; soils and hydrology; air and water quality; non-motorized recreation; and adjacent federal and private lands. In addition, the analysis will identify any mitigation needed to implement any of these opportunities. It is expected this planning project will tier to the EIS to eliminate duplication of analysis and field work.

Natural and cultural specialists will be visiting each of the 180 unauthorized routes and 307 areas during the first year of the planning project. The analysis, writing of the draft document, public participation and appeal period will occur in the second and third year of the planning project. It is expected to have an Environmental Assessment completed for each of the two districts. The project would fund a contract for an Interdisciplinary Team to conduct field surveys, assess resource concerns, and complete environmental analysis. The contractor would: 1) develop a proposed action based upon the field work and significant issues raised by the public; 2) development of alternatives to address identified significant issues; and 3) develop environmental consequences that would result if a developed alternative were to be implemented. In addition, the project would fund SNF natural and cultural specialists to review the work of the contractor.

### B. Relation of Proposed Project to OHV Recreation

Based upon National and Regional direction, the Sierra NF commenced with environmental analysis to produce the Sierra National Forest Motorized Travel Management Environmental Impact Statement based upon the Travel Management Rule.

The implementable decision is one with the maximum number of miles of roads and trails and the maximum acres of areas; therefore there is an adverse effect to motorized recreation when compared to current management of open to cross-country in the lower elevation. The potential wheeled motor vehicle mileage (140 miles) would be available for a variety of OHV opportunities. There is a net loss of approximately 605,000 acres available for wheeled motor vehicle activities due to

the prohibition of cross-country travel. Motorized recreation opportunity will be focused on a designated system. There is an adverse impact with the addition of less than 80 miles due to (1) the reduction will compresses the existing and future use into a limited, designated system and (2) the prohibition of travel on 453 remaining miles of unauthorized routes.

Therefore, the intent of this planning process is to almost double the total mileage of motorized trails and primitive roads open for a motorized recreation experience. Specifically, the planning process will look at those motorized opportunities and areas that access motorized and non-motorized recreation identified as important by the commenting public.

Nearly all visitors to the Sierra National Forest, regardless of the purpose for their visit, use the motorized system on the Forest to reach their destination. This proposal would provide a diversity of road, trail, and areas for unrestricted motorized travel and parking/staging areas for accessing motorized or non-motorized recreation for OHV recreation users to experience a variety of environments and modes of travel consistent with the National Forest recreation role and land capability to sustain OHV recreation opportunities.

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### **C. Statement of Activities**

The applicant proposes hire a contractor to survey and assess identified routes on lands managed by the Sierra National Forest associated with motorized use (including motorcycle, ATV, and high clearance vehicles) and assess for sustainable recreation OHV opportunities.

Activities include the need to evaluate effects the identified routes have on cultural and natural resources (air quality, aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, botany, hydrology, and soils), and effects of routes on roadless and primitive area characteristics and the local economy.

The contractor would develop a proposed action based on the internal and public input. Two environmental documents would be prepared that would include significant issues raised by the public, alternatives that address identified significant issues, and the environmental consequences that would result if a developed alternative were to be implemented. Forest natural and cultural specialists would review documents developed by the contractor at identified check points throughout the project. The three year project is expected to accomplish the field data collection and review, writing of the documents (EA, BE/Bas, etc, public meetings, and any appeals).

### **D. List of Reports**

The following reports are needed to complete the project:

- OHV Route Evaluation Forms (Green, Yellow, Red) to assess route/area conditions
- Stream Crossing Assessment
- Well Sited/Well Suited evaluation forms to determine if route/area is conducive for use
- Soil Risk Assessment
- Economic Effects Analysis
- Civil Rights Impact Analysis
- Archaeological Reconnaissance Report
- Biological Evaluation and Assessment Reports for aquatic wildlife, botany, and terrestrial wildlife.
- Cumulative Watershed Effects
- Engineering Transportation Assessment for roads and trails.
- Environmental Assessments for the Bass Lake and High Sierra Ranger Districts



## Additional Documentation

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**1. Timeline for Completion**

Attachments:

[SierraNF Timeline](#)

**2. Optional Project-Specific Application Documents**

**3. Optional Project-specific Maps**

**Project Cost Estimate**

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:		Version # _____	APP # _____
<b>APPLICANT NAME :</b>	USFS - Sierra National Forest		
<b>PROJECT TITLE :</b>	Planning - Add roads, trails and areas (FINAL)	<b>PROJECT NUMBER (Division use only) :</b>	G09-02-17-P02
<b>PROJECT TYPE :</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Education & Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Ground Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration		
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION :</b>	<p>The Sierra National Forest (SNF) is submitting a planning proposal to conduct environmental analysis to add roads, trails and areas to a designated system.</p> <p>The SNF is located in Fresno, Madera and Mariposa Counties in the State of California. The SNF is bordered on the west by private property in the eastern foothills of the San Joaquin Valley, on the north by Yosemite National Park and Stanislaus National Forest, and on the east and south by Inyo National Forest, Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park and Sequoia National Forest.</p> <p>The SNF is within a 1-hour drive from Madera or Fresno, a 3-hour drive from Stockton or Bakersfield, and a 6-hour drive from San Francisco or Los Angeles. The communities of Shaver Lake, Big Creek, North Fork, and Bass Lake are located within the SNF boundary. About 95,725 acres of private lands (such as Southern California Edison, Pacific Gas and Electric and residential areas) occur within the project area.</p> <p>The SNF is in the process of releasing the decision to bring a number of unauthorized roads, trails and areas into the National Forest Transportation System (NFTS). The decision results in large areas previously used by motorized visitors that will no longer be available. Once the decision is implemented, the Forest will be closed to motorized cross-country travel. One result of this closure will be a loss of access to hundreds of dispersed parking areas greater than 30 feet from the road or accessed off an unauthorized route not brought forward in the EIS for analysis.</p> <p>Public comment, received during the public participation process for the EIS, requested 994 unauthorized roads and trails from the GPS'ed inventory as well as 325 areas. The Forest Service reviewed 1,055 routes and 54 areas from the GPS'ed inventory and public input. This review resulted in the identification of 250 routes as existing system roads and trails; 284 unauthorized routes and 20 areas to be considered as additions to NFTS. The maximum alternative brings in 234 routes and 20 areas.</p> <p>This project is to conduct environmental analysis on 180 unauthorized routes for 89 miles and 307 areas for 133 acres. The documents will include analysis of long and short term impacts of these opportunities on: aquatic and terrestrial wildlife; prehistoric and historic cultural resources; soils and hydrology; air and water quality; non-motorized recreation; and adjacent federal and private lands. In addition, the analysis will identify any mitigation needed to implement any of these opportunities. It is expected this planning project will tier to the EIS to eliminate duplication of analysis and field work.</p> <p>Natural and cultural specialists will be visiting each of the 180 unauthorized routes and 307 areas during the first year of the planning project. The analysis, writing of the draft document, public participation and appeal period will occur in the second and third year of the planning project. It is expected to have an Environmental Assessment completed for each of the two districts. The project would fund a contract for an Interdisciplinary Team to conduct field surveys, assess resource concerns, and complete environmental analysis. The contractor would: 1) develop a proposed action based upon the field work and significant issues raised by the public; 2) development of alternatives to address identified significant issues; and 3) develop environmental consequences that would result if a developed alternative were to be implemented. In addition, the project would fund SNF natural and cultural specialists to review the</p>		

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2009/2010  
 Agency: USFS - Sierra National Forest  
 Application: Planning - Add roads, trails and areas (FINAL)

3/1/2010

work of the contractor.							
Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total	
<b>DIRECT EXPENSES</b>							
<b>Program Expenses</b>							
<b>1</b>	<b>Staff</b>						
	Management and Admin Staff Notes : District Rangers who need to meet with staff, review document and work with appealants.	10.000	452.300	DAY	0.00	4,523.00	4,523.00
	Management Staff Notes : District Recreation Officers five days each to coordinate with district rangers, district staff, attend IDT meetings.	10.000	352.250	DAY	0.00	3,523.00	3,523.00
	Resources Staff Notes : Five Cultural and Natural Resource Specialists from each district to work 6 days each	60.000	331.680	DAY	9,951.00	9,950.00	19,901.00
	Management and Admin Staff Notes : Forest Recreation Staff who is responsible for writing and negotiating the contract, will be the point of contact with the contractor, and the recreation specialist for reviewing of the environmental documents.	20.000	431.860	DAY	4,319.00	4,318.00	8,637.00
	<b>Total for Staff</b>				14,270.00	22,314.00	36,584.00
<b>2</b>	<b>Contracts</b>						
	Other-Conduct analysis and documents for Notes : Contract for field data collection, review of data, conduct public information workshops, develop final proposed action, purpose and need, write two environmental anaysis detailed to the specific district, write necessary support documents (BE/BAs and others), follow documnet through to conclusion. Current EIS cost the Sierra NF in excess of two million. It is expected the contractor will complete about the same amount of work for less than 10% of	1.000	200000.000	EA	175,000.00	25,000.00	200,000.00

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	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
	the EIS.						
3	<b>Materials / Supplies</b>						
4	<b>Equipment Use Expenses</b>						
5	<b>Equipment Purchases</b>						
6	<b>Others</b>						
7	<b>Indirect Costs</b>						
	Indirect Costs-Indierct Costs Notes : Forest overhead costs are currently at 8%	1.000	16460.000	EA	0.00	16,460.00	16,460.00
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>					189,270.00	63,774.00	253,044.00
<b>TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES</b>					189,270.00	63,774.00	253,044.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>					<b>189,270.00</b>	<b>63,774.00</b>	<b>253,044.00</b>

Project Cost Summary for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2009/2010  
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 Application: Planning - Add roads, trails and areas (FINAL)

3/1/2010

	Line Item	Grant Request	Match	Total	Narrative
<b>DIRECT EXPENSES</b>					
<b>Program Expenses</b>					
1	Staff	14,270.00	22,314.00	36,584.00	The project funds Forest natural and cultural specialists, District Rangers, and District Recreation Staff Officers are to review contractor developed documents and data; and Forest recreation staff to work with and monitor the contact. It is expected resource specialist on each district to review the Environmental Assessment developed by the contractor prior to the document going out for public review.
2	Contracts	175,000.00	25,000.00	200,000.00	The contractor is to survey and assess identified routes on lands managed by the Sierra National Forest associated with motorized use (including motorcycle, ATV, and high clearance vehicles) and assess for recreation OHV opportunities. Activities include the need to evaluate effects identified routes on cultural and natural resources (air quality, aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, botany, hydrology, and soils), and effects of routes on roadless and primitive area characteristics and the local economy. The contractor would develop a proposed action based on the environmental assessments and public input. An environmental document would be prepared that would include significant issues raised by the public, alternatives that address identified significant issues, and the environmental consequences that would result if a developed alternative were to be implemented. It is expected to have an Environmental Assessment for each of the two

Project Cost Summary for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2009/2010  
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					districts.
3	Materials / Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	
4	Equipment Use Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	
5	Equipment Purchases	0.00	0.00	0.00	
6	Others	0.00	0.00	0.00	
7	Indirect Costs	0.00	16,460.00	16,460.00	Forest overhead costs are currently at 8%
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>		189,270.00	63,774.00	253,044.00	
<b>TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES</b>		189,270.00	63,774.00	253,044.00	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>189,270.00</b>	<b>63,774.00</b>	<b>253,044.00</b>	

## Environmental Review Data Sheet (ERDS)

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### ITEM 1 and ITEM 2

#### ITEM 1

- a. ITEM 1 - Has a CEQA Notice of Determination (NOD) been filed for the Project?  Yes  No  
(Please select Yes or No)

#### ITEM 2

- b. Does the proposed Project include a request for funding for CEQA and/or NEPA document preparation prior to implementing the remaining Project Deliverables (i.e., is it a two-phased Project pursuant to Section 4970.06.1(b)) (Please select Yes or No)  Yes  No

### ITEM 3 - Project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378

- c. ITEM 3 - Are the proposed activities a "Project" under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378?  Yes  No  
(Please select Yes or No)
- d. The Application is requesting funds solely for personnel and support to enforce OHV laws and ensure public safety. These activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. (Please select Yes or No)  Yes  No
- e. Other. Explain why proposed activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. DO NOT complete ITEMS 4 – 10

This grant application is for a planning project only. No ground disturbing activities will occur.

### ITEM 4 - Impact of this Project on Wetlands

### ITEM 5 - Cumulative Impacts of this Project

### ITEM 6 - Soil Impacts

### ITEM 7 - Damage to Scenic Resources

### ITEM 8 - Hazardous Materials

- Is the proposed Project Area located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code (hazardous materials)? (Please select Yes or No)  Yes  No

If YES, describe the location of the hazard relative to the Project site, the level of hazard and the measures to be taken to minimize or avoid the hazards.

### ITEM 9 - Potential for Adverse Impacts to Historical or Cultural Resources

- Would the proposed Project have potential for any substantial adverse impacts to historical or cultural resources? (Please select Yes or No)  Yes  No

Discuss the potential for the proposed Project to have any substantial adverse impacts to historical or cultural resources.

**ITEM 10 - Indirect Significant Impacts**

**CEQA/NEPA Attachment**

## Planning Project Criteria

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### 1. Project Cost Estimate - Q 1. (Auto populates from Cost Estimate)

1. As calculated on the Project Cost Estimate, the percentage of the Project costs covered by the Applicant is 0

(Note: This field will auto-populate once the Cost Estimate and Evaluation Criteria are Validated.) (Please select one from list)

- 76% or more (10 points)                       51% - 75% (5 points)  
 26% - 50% (3 points)                               25% (Match minimum) (No points)

### 2. Planning Project - Q 2.

#### A Planning Project - Page 1

2. The Planning Project would address the following 4

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

- Potential effects of OHV Recreation on special-status species habitats  
 Potential effects of OHV Recreation on cultural resources  
 Potential effects of OHV Recreation on soil conditions  
 Potential effects of OHV Recreation on water quality  
 Potential effects of OHV Recreation on other recreation uses  
 Potential effects of OHV Recreation on adjacent lands.  
 Potential impact to relationships between OHV Recreation and local residents  
 Toxic or hazardous materials within a Project Area or adjacent property that may impact OHV Recreation  
 Trail issues such as traffic patterns, trails closures, appropriate uses, etc.

#### B. Planning Project - Page 2

Explain each statement that was checked

The planning project would address special-status habitat, cultural resources, soil conditions, water quality, and other recreation uses through surveys, specialist's reports, trail condition reports, and biological evaluations. The planning project will review the non-system trails for toxic and/or hazardous materials. If toxic and/or hazardous materials are found, recommendations will be made regarding their disposal in order to avoid harm to our visitors. Potential impacts to relationships between OHV recreation and local residents will be addressed where needed. Adjacent land includes private property, special use permitted areas like resorts and organized camps, wilderness and other specialized areas. Issues of traffic patterns, trail closures, appropriate uses, will be analyzed and addressed through IDT members and through the public participation process. This analysis will review

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- 6 or more items checked (4 points)                       4 to 5 items checked (3 points)  
 2 to 3 items checked (2 points)                               1 or no items checked (No points)

### 3. Motorized Access - Q 3.

3. The Project would lead to improved facilities that provide motorized access to the following nonmotorized recreation opportunities 6

(Check all that apply) Scoring: 2 points each, up to a maximum of 6 points (Please select applicable values)

- Camping     Birding

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hiking  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equestrian trails |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock Climbing                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)    |   |

**4. Public Input - Q 4.**

4. The Project proposal was developed with public input employing the following 2

(Check all that apply) Scoring: Maximum of 2 points (Please select applicable values)

- Publicly noticed meeting(s) with the general public to discuss Project (1 point)  
 Conference call(s) with interested parties (1 point)  
 Meeting(s) with stakeholders (1 point)

Explain each statement that was checked

The project was discussed at Motorized Travel Management workshops for the Sierra National Forest Draft Environmental Impact Statement in May and June of 2009. Earlier the Forest met with 25 individuals representing different type of recreational opportunities, including businesses that rely on recreational visitors stopping to purchase or use their services. There were individual requests for workshops at locations outside those planned by the Forest. Specifically, a workshop was held in Yosemite at the request of some employees concerned about the borders of the National Park and Madera County Board of Supervisors requested a meeting be held in the town of Madera. Recreation employees made it a point to talk to motorized visitors during the summer to make sure the out of town visitors understand the need to be involved.

**5. Stakeholder Input - Q 5.**

5. If the Project were approved, the planning process would incorporate substantial stakeholder input: 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- No (No points)  Yes (5 points)

If 'Yes', explain, specifically, how it would be 'substantial'. Identify stakeholders

Backcountry Horsemen of California local chapters are requesting 50-100 additional parking staging areas  
Stewards of the Sierra National Forest are requesting their input in to the original EIS be brought in to the designated system.

California Wilderness Coalition is requesting all unauthorized routes remain out of undeveloped areas and areas the group feels are potential for future wilderness designation.

Each of these stakeholders are providing substantial comments heard by the Forest in EIS public comments. In addition, the public comments on these grant applications show the continued concern for loss of motorized recreation opportunities.

**6. Utilization of Partnerships - Q 6.**

6. The Project will utilize partnerships to successfully accomplish the Project. The number of partner organizations that will participate in the Project are 4

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- 4 or more (4 points)  2 to 3 (2 points)  
 1 (1 point)  None (No points)

List partner organization(s)

The Sierra National Forest expects to utilize partnerships to successfully accomplish implementation of an analysis to designate additional motorized trails and areas. We have developed an adopt-a-trail program that gives OHV/OSV clubs and volunteers the opportunity to assist the Forest Service with maintenance and any mitigation tasks. The clubs will help open and maintain our trail systems in conjunction with Forest Service OHV/OSV staff. The clubs are as follows: 4X4 Him Christian Wheelers, Clovis Independent 4X4 Club, Lock and Low 4X4 Club, Mountain Toppers, Hang M High 4X4 Club of Fresno and Stewards of the Sierra National Forest.

**7. Sustain OHV Opportunity - Q 7.**

7. The Planning Project sustains OHV Opportunity in the following manner 7

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

- Project will develop management plans for existing OHV Opportunity (4 points)
- Project will complete environmental review for an OHV Development Project (3 points)
- Project supports development of OHV Opportunities adjacent to population centers (3 points)
- Project supports development of OHV Opportunities in areas that lack legal OHV Opportunity (2 points)
- Project will develop a system of designated OHV routes for an existing OHV Opportunity (2 points)

Explain each statement that was checked

Regardless which alternative is chosen for the Sierra National Forest Motorized Travel Management Environmental Impact Statement, there will be large areas previously used by motorized visitors that will no longer be available. The project will add public requested roads, trails and areas forest wide. The project will complete the remaining motorized route designation efforts for the Sierra NF through development of two district Environmental Assessments. This planning project will provide additional roads, trails and areas in to the Forest travel system and will appear on the annual Motor Vehicle Use Map.

The SNF is within a 1-hour drive from Madera or Fresno, a 3-hour drive from Stockton or Bakersfield, and a 6-hour drive from San Francisco or Los Angeles. The communities of Shaver Lake, Big Creek, North Fork, and Bass Lake are located within the SNF boundary. About 95,725 acres of private lands (such as Southern California Edison, Pacific Gas and Electric and residential areas) occur within the projec

**8. Identification of Funding Sources - Q 8.**

8. Funds for implementing the completed plan have been identified 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- No (No points)
- Yes (5 points)

Explain 'Yes' response

Historically, funding sources associated with designated travel routes has been a combination of Forest Service appropriated dollars and State funding, such as OHMVR funds. In recent years, appropriated dollars have been minimal. Trail route maintenance is accomplished with a combination of efforts, including work provided by volunteers, appropriated Federal funding, and State funding through grant agreements. Costs associated with implementing changes to road use, will be paid for primarily through Federal appropriated dollars.

Reference Document

Sierra NF 2010 Lands, Recreation, Heritage, Partnerships, and Wilderness Annual Business Plan

**9. Offsite Impacts - Q 9.**

9. The Planning Project would address offsite impacts relative to the Project Area (e.g., sound, fugitive dust, runoff): 5

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- No (No points)
- Yes (5 points)

Explain 'Yes' response

The Interdisciplinary Team will look at offsite sedimentary delivery and impacts to adjacent private land off Forest. Field surveys and trail evaluations will assess off site runoff and then the IDT will make recommendations for trail treatments for OHV trail stabilization, stream crossing stabilization, trail gully and riling stabilization, and constructed drainage features.

