During the April 21-22, 2015 Forest Leadership Team meeting, we discussed the impacts of recent after hours vehicle vandalism and the present forest-wide practice regarding vehicle storage. This subject has gained momentum recently due to the vandalism, but it has been part of previous decisions regarding employee requests, previous agreements concerning duty officers, and the need to implement consistent vehicle storage guidance for all employees.

The Duty Officers storage guidance was an agreement by the four southern forests to reduce the need for home to work agreements, since the Forest Supervisor can only approve 10 times per year on an as needed basis. Therefore, to increase efficiency and ensure rapid response after hours, the Forest Supervisors agreed to let Duty Officers (most particularly) park vehicles at a secure government facility (not only Forest Service facilities) that were closest to their locations. However, as mentioned above we have been hit recently by repeated vandalism in the Big Pines area due to vehicles parked at unsecure locations although they were on Government property.

The new Director of Engineering, who also manages Fleet, heard about the Duty Officer agreement and indicated that the current practice was not allowable per policy and it should cease and desist immediately. As a result of that guidance, the four Forest Supervisors met in March/April during the Regional Leadership Team agreed to be consistent on all four forests.

In following I had conversations with the Office of General Council and their opinion is, “employees who are not on duty (charging to 01 time) using a government vehicle and are not performing the duties of their job are not covered should an accident occur”. This practice gives employees a false sense of being covered and protected when in reality they are not.

Additionally employees who have been using their vehicles to commute from one location to their duty station, could be classified as using the government vehicle for commuting purposes and subject to a bill for collection for that usage. The Forest Supervisors all agreed to stop that practice wherever it exists immediately so that the possibility of future collections would not be pursued.

The forest put together a team to develop a supplement to the policy that will work for the Angeles National Forest and their duty officers, however not sure how long that would take and would need to be approved by the Region.
Therefore effective immediately, all employees on the Angeles National Forest, must park their government vehicles at their duty stations, where they have an office or report to work (not telework), and the vehicle must be parked in a secure Forest Service facility. This direction is to be implemented no later than the end of this pay period May 2, 2015. This allows for those employees in travel status to make alternative arrangements given their situations.

\[Signature\]

DANIEL A. LOVATO
Acting Forest Supervisor