

PUBLIC NOTICE

From: Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre & Gunnison National Forests

Subject: TSG Ski & Golf, LLC Snow Study Permit Request

Publishing Date: November 27, 2008

Contact: Judy Schutz (970) 327-4261

The US Forest Service is proposing to issue a temporary special use permit to TSG Ski & Golf, LLC (Telski) for snow study activities on the Uncompahgre National Forest. The permit would authorize Telski to conduct a scientific snow study analysis on National Forest System lands in the Upper Bear Creek drainage for a term of one year. The special use permit could be renewed for an additional term upon request by Telski. The study would start mid December and conclude on March 30, 2009.

The purpose and need for this permit is to allow Telski to gain a greater understanding of avalanche forecasting and snow safety in Upper Bear Creek. The proposed study area is adjacent to the existing ski area permit boundary on the east side of Gold Hill. The authorized area would encompass about 1500 acres that would include: Nellie Mine, Delta Bowl, Lena Basin, San Joaquin Ridge and the East Fork of Bear Creek. As part of the study, Telski would set up and maintain a remote weather station near the top of Waterfall Chute that would collect local weather data.

The goal of the study is to develop an Avalanche Atlas and associated maps that identify avalanche paths and their individual characteristics. The Avalanche Atlas would be submitted to the Forest Service at the end of the study for review. Telluride Ski Patrol (TSP) snow safety teams would analyze the terrain, weather and snowpack in Upper Bear Creek to identify and document potential avalanche hazards that may exist in the study area. TSP will use a combination of snowpack observation techniques such as ski testing, snow pit profiles, and explosive testing to gather data.

The use of explosives would be limited to those placed by hand and would not exceed 50 lbs per detonation. Explosives testing in the study area would not be mitigating or reducing any of the potential avalanche hazard in Upper Bear Creek. Backcountry users traveling in the study area would still need to proceed with caution due to the inherent risks of backcountry travel.

TSP would conduct snow studies activities seven days a week and the area would remain closed to the public from 6:00 am until 10:00 am on a daily basis to protect snow safety teams. The permitted area would open at 10:00 am unless there were extraordinary circumstances such as an avalanche accident or explosive mis-fire that would require the area to remain temporarily closed. TSP would post signs at the Ophir to Telluride trailhead, at the top of T-12 and at the Bear Creek trailhead explaining that TSP is conducting a snow study and may be using explosives. All notification signs will have a

toll free number for additional information and the sign at the top of T-12 will state “Do not pass this Point before 10:00 am without first calling the toll free number.” TSP would be required to educate the public about the snow study program through local avalanche forums, local radio, internet and local newspapers.

Additional information can be requested by calling Scott Spielman at (970) 327-4261. Comments may be submitted in hard copy through the mail, e-mail, fax, or hand delivered by no later than December 11, 2008 to:

Attention: Snow Study Analysis
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