



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Red Rock
Ranger District

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File Code: 1950-1/2350

Date: May 25, 2005

Dear Friend:

The Red Rock Ranger District proposes to extend the existing Mail Trail #84 from Mail Trail Tank to Hwy. 260 generally following the historical alignment. The proposed trail extension travels 0.7 miles west from a proposed trailhead and then turns south and continues 5.3 miles to the junction with the existing Mail Trail near Mail Trail Tank. The existing Mail Trail, which has been on the Official Forest Service Trail System since 1990, goes 2.3 miles and drops 1,200 ft. in elevation through the Fossil Springs Wilderness to the junction with Fossil Creek. The trail then meets the Fossil Springs Trail—Tonto National Forest Trail #18 which climbs towards Strawberry, AZ. The small trailhead is proposed on Forest Road 9247B, off highway 260 a small distance. At this time the Forest Service is proposing Alternative 2 as the alternative that best meets the needs and addresses the concerns expressed during the process, which includes concerns for impacts to Chiricahua Leopard Frog near the project area.

The Forest Service has been working with many trail interest groups in the Verde Valley including the Camp Verde Cavalry and Yavapai Trails Committee to address concerns and work toward the extension of this historic trail.

At this time, we propose Alternative 2 be selected as the best alternative. This alternative would approve the trail extension with required mitigation measures to minimize impacts to the leopard frog habitat and populations.

The enclosed Mail Trail Extension Summary of Proposed Action provides a summary of impacts of the proposed action compared to the No Action Alternative. The document is also available by accessing the Coconino National Forest website at: www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/nepa The EA for this project will be finalized after the 30-day comment period and before a final decision is made.

Request for Comments

At this time, we are asking for comments on this project. Your comments are important to help us understand any issues or concerns you may have about this proposal. When you respond, please make sure your comments are fully formed and as specific as possible to assist us in the analysis.

Please send your comments to Bill Stafford, Red Rock Ranger District, PO Box 300, Sedona, AZ 86339; call Bill at 928-203-7529; or email – comments to southwestern-coconino-redrock@fs.fed.us



This is the official Notice and Comment period for this project, per 36 CFR Part 215.3(a). If we do not receive any substantive comments or if we receive only supportive comments, there will be no appeal period following the completion of the EA and my subsequent decision (36 CFR 215.12(1)). Public comments (written, oral, facsimile, hand-delivered or electronic) on the Proposed Action will be accepted for 30 days following the date of publication of a Notice of Availability in the Arizona Daily Sun. Regulations prohibit extending the length of this comment period.

Thank you for your time and interest in your National Forest.

Sincerely,

/s/ Ken Anderson
KEN ANDERSON
District Ranger

Enclosure (1)