



File Code: 1950

Date: March 31, 2008

Dear Friend of the Ashley,

The Ashley National Forest Outlaw ATV Trail, located on the Vernal Ranger District, was established in 2001 to address a growing need of providing motorized trail opportunities on sustainable, designated forest routes. The trail has become very popular and receives considerable use, especially around recreation locations such as dispersed camping areas, reservoirs, creeks, and campgrounds. This heavy use has resulted in some trail damage and resource concerns along certain locations, such as on Forest trail #1196 near East Galloway, where drainage has become an issue. Most trail impacts can be ameliorated through general trail maintenance and improvements. However, deep rutting, trail braiding, and soil erosion occurring along a wet meadow requires rerouting a portion of the trail around this sensitive riparian habitat.

For this project, I am proposing to reroute approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ -mile of motorized Forest system trail #1196. The East Galloway Trail #1196 is part of the Outlaw ATV Trail and is located south of the Red Cloud Loop National Scenic Backway, between Trout Creek Guard Station and Oaks Park Reservoir (T.1S., R.20E., Sec.15&22). Refer to the attached map for the exact project location.

The purpose of the reroute is to (1) rehabilitate and abandon approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile of trail bisecting a wet meadow that is heavily impacted with deep ruts, multiple braids, and constant erosion; and (2) realign approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ -mile of trail away from the meadow onto a higher surface with better drainage. The realignment will be located through an old timber harvest on a small bench, located west of the meadow, and will incorporate previously disturbed areas, thereby minimizing a need to cut trees and other vegetation. The trail tread along this alignment provides better drainage and incorporate hardier surfaces with exposed bedrock.

The trail reroute will start approximately 1.6-miles south of the trailhead (40°43'09.2"N, 109°39'38.2"W) and will end at approximately mile-marker 1.9 (40°42'50.2"N, 109°39'38.3"W). A minor trail bridge may be constructed to cross a small 3-ft. wide intermittent creek near the start of the reroute. Trail work will be conducted during the summer months of 2008 when surface conditions are drier and more suitable for trail work. Equipment ranging from primitive hand tools to a narrow trail dozer (SWECO) may be used to rehab the old trail and align the reroute. This project is made possible by UT State Trails Grant funding in combination with Forest Service crews and funds.

This project is in compliance with the Ashley National Forest Plan (1986). Trail work will comply with agency standards and guidelines as identified in "Standard Specifications for Construction and Maintenance of Trails" (EM-7720-103) and "Managing Degraded Off-Highway Vehicle Trails in Wet, Unstable, and Sensitive Environments" (0223-2821-MTDC).



I believe this project, as identified by the specific actions listed above, may be excluded from documentation in an EA or EIS, but requires a project or case file and decision memo as directed by Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 31.2, Category 1—Construction and reconstruction of trails. Any decision issued under this authority would not be appealable under 36 CFR 215. However, determination of the appropriate level of analysis and documentation will be made only after reviewing specialist reports, biological evaluations/assessments, public comments, and other pertinent information and analyses.

You are invited to comment on the project at this time. Comments that are specific are most helpful. Comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project. Send your written comments to:

Nicholas T. Schmelter, District Ranger
Vernal Ranger District
355 North Vernal Ave.
Vernal, UT 84078

Comments can also be e-mailed to comments-intermtn-ashley@fs.fed.us. It would be most useful to receive your electronic comments in MS Word (*.doc) or rich text format (*.rtf). Comments are due by **May 16, 2008**. For further information concerning this proposal, please contact Omero Torres by phone at (435) 781-5124.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the management of the Ashley National Forest.

Sincerely,

NICHOLAS T. SCHMELTER
District Ranger

Attachment: Project map