[3410-11]
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Forest Service
Utah Northern Goshawk Habitat Management
AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA
ACTION: Proposal to Prepare Management Direction for Northern Goshawk Habitat Management on the Ashley, Dixie, Fishlake, Manti-LaSal, Uinta and Wasatch-Cache National Forests in the Intermountain Region (R4), USDA Forest Service.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Intermountain Region is proposing to amend management direction in specific Forest Plans and/or the Intermountain Regional Guide.

This notice describes the proposed management direction (in the form of goals, standards and guidelines, and monitoring requirements), a desired habitat condition statement giving a portrayal of land conditions expected to result from the implementation of the proposed management direction over time, information concerning public participation, and the name and address of the agency official who can provide additional information. The purpose of this notice is to begin the scoping phase of public involvement in this process.

DATE: Written comments should be sent to the Utah Northern Goshawk Project by March 8, 1999.

ADDRESS: Send written comments to: USDA Forest Service
Utah Northern Goshawk Project Team
c/o Uinta NF
PO Box 1428
Provo, UT, 84601
or on-line at: www.fs.fed.us/r4/goshawk
or e-mail to: goshawk3/r4_uinta@fs.fed.us

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Randall Hayman, 801/342-5100 or 435/865-3700; e-mail: goshawk3/r4_uinta@fs.fed.us.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Jack Blackwell, Intermountain Regional Forester, 324 25th Street, Ogden, UT 84401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Intermountain Region of the Forest Service filed a notice in the **Federal Register** (Vol. 63, No. 172, pages 47224-47225) on September 4, 1998 stating that the Forest Service, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management and the USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), was reviewing the latest Utah state-wide information relating to the sustainability of habitat for the northern goshawk (*Northern Goshawk in Utah: Habitat Assessment and Recommendations* (Graham et al. 1999, in press)) and the USDI, FWS 12-month finding on a petition to list the northern goshawk (FR, June 29, 1998, Vol. 63, No. 124, pages 35183-35184). This notice stated that the Intermountain Region was proposing to amend regional direction, Regional Guide, and/or Forest Plans to incorporate interim direction in the form of goals and objectives, desired habitat conditions,

standards and guidelines, and monitoring requirements developed in response to new scientific information concerning the management of forested habitat for the northern goshawk and its prey in Utah. At that time, the Forest Service expected the determination of proposed management direction to be completed and available for public review by November 30, 1998. Due to unforeseen delays in the development of this direction, the determination of proposed management direction was not completed until now. The comments received in response to the prior **Federal Register** notice were considered in the development of the proposed management direction that follows.

The Forest Service, in accordance with 36 CFR §219.19, develops land and resource management plans that, in part, manage fish and wildlife habitat to maintain viable populations of existing native and desired non-native vertebrate species in the particular planning area. Forest Plans describe the long-term direction for managing National Forests. Among other things, decisions in Forest Plans establish multiple-use goals and objectives and establish forest-wide management requirements (standards and guidelines). In compliance with their own laws and regulations, and in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, the Forest Service proposes to amend specific Forest Plans and/or Intermountain Regional Guide.

The purpose and need for this new or revised management direction is:

PURPOSE: The purpose of this action is to provide management direction that maintains or restores functioning forested habitats for the northern goshawk and its prey on National Forest System lands within the Ashley, Dixie, Fishlake, Manti-LaSal, Uinta, and Wasatch-Cache National Forests. Functioning forested habitats are important in sustaining viable populations of northern goshawk in Utah.

NEED: A habitat assessment and management recommendations for the northern goshawk and subsequent habitat conservation strategy were developed for the State of Utah in response to suspected downward trends in goshawk habitat and/or populations. Because of the important role National Forest System lands will play in restoring or maintaining forested habitat for the northern goshawk, there is an immediate need to incorporate the principles and recommendations in these documents into management direction, for the reasons described below.

Changes in forest structure, especially large tree removal, and other forest management activities singly or in combination may negatively affect goshawk populations (Crocker-Bedford 1990). Perhaps one of the greatest influences on habitat is fire exclusion from forest and woodland ecosystems. Successful fire exclusion has altered native successional pathways, resulting in the ingrowth of shade-tolerant tree species throughout Utah. With these changes in habitat came suspected declines in goshawk populations in much of the western United States (Bloom and others 1986, Herron and others 1985, Kennedy 1989). [Graham et al. 1999, in press]

In 1991, the goshawk was designated as a sensitive species in the USDA Forest Service Intermountain Region (Region 4). In March 1997, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources classified the goshawk as a sensitive species. This designation identifies species in the State that are most vulnerable to population declines or habitat loss and stimulates management

actions for the conservation of the species. To address the issue of declining goshawk habitat in Utah, a Northern Goshawk Interagency Technical Team was created. This team was charged with completing an assessment for the State of Utah.

The habitat assessment (Graham et al. 1999, in press) provided a detailed description of current habitat conditions and capabilities and found them adequate to support nesting goshawks at the current time and at the scale analyzed. However, the scientists were not able to predict future habitat conditions because of the great latitude in management allowed by current land management plans and policies on state and federal lands. Current management plans and policies are flexible enough to both permit activities that address habitat needs for the goshawk as well as allow those that do not.

In response to the findings in the habitat assessment, a team of Forest Service biologists, supported by Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, USDI,Fish and Wildlife Service and USDI, Bureau of Land Management biologists, began the development of a Habitat Conservation Strategy (HCS) for the northern goshawk. This strategy, completed in September 1998, recommends additional site specific measures that, if implemented, will ensure that habitat for the goshawk is managed consistently across federal and state lands in Utah. By incorporating the principles recommended in the HCS "agencies will contribute to sustaining short and long term habitat for goshawks which is important to their overall viability across the state. ... Consistency in management of habitat is key to providing a reasonable probability of goshawk persistence." [HCS, 1998]

All forested habitats in Utah are potentially suitable habitat for the goshawk. This includes coniferous and aspen forests, but does not include woodlands (e.g., pinyon/juniper). The assessment (Graham et al. 1999, in press) found that 84 percent of the medium and high valued nesting habitat, and 81 percent of the optimum and high valued habitat for the northern goshawk in Utah are found on National Forest System lands. Due to the important role National Forest System lands will play in restoring or maintaining habitat for the northern goshawk in Utah, the Forest Service elected to take immediate action to determine how to incorporate principles recommended in the HCS into management actions proposed in the future.

To aid in this determination, each of the six National Forests in Utah completed Supplemental Information Reports (SIRs). The SIRs analyzed if the HCS represented significant new information or changed conditions bearing on their current Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) management direction or effects identified in the accompanying Final Environmental Impact Statement. Preliminary findings in the SIRs indicated that amendments to current Forest Plans and/or the Intermountain Regional Guide will be required to implement some elements of the strategy.

This action will amend management direction in Forest Plans and/or the Intermountain Regional Guide. When forest plans for the affected National Forests are revised or suitably amended (estimated to be 2-4 years out), the management direction will be reviewed and updated as needed. This immediate action will maintain habitat quantity, quality, and distribution on National Forest System lands important to supporting viable populations of goshawks in Utah for the remainder of the current planning period. It will also provide consistency in project design, implementation and monitoring where habitat for the goshawk

and its prey is involved within the Ashley, Dixie, Fishlake, Manti-LaSal, Uinta, and Wasatch-Cache National Forests. By taking action now, options for future management direction that these National Forests may want to consider during forest plan revision or amendment efforts will be retained.

It is recognized that the northern goshawk ranges throughout much of the western United States; however, this project only addresses National Forest System lands for the six National Forests stated above. The scope of this project is limited to this area because the Conservation Strategy and Agreement, and the scientific assessment supporting the strategy, only addressed northern goshawk habitat in the State of Utah, "Utah was the largest geographic area used for assessing goshawk habitat. It would have been useful to look at a regional scale to set the Utah assessment in context to explore how the habitat in Utah is related to habitat in adjacent states. But, time, budget, and personnel constraints, did not permit the wider analysis. Only recommendations and inferences on the status of goshawk habitat within Utah were requested by the involved and cooperating agencies." (Graham et al. 1999 (in press)).

Benefits of viewing habitat at larger scales were recognized. However, the biologists involved in the development of the assessment and strategy stated "It is our belief that the use of the state scale (i.e., its aggregation of landscapes) to conduct a habitat based analysis for PVA" [population viability analysis] "will provide us with the information needed to understand the different ecological processes that influence the life histories of this far ranging, broadly distributed species." [HCS]

The Intermountain Regional Forester (Region 4) assembled an interdisciplinary team in October 1998 to begin the development of proposed management direction that responded to the identified purpose and need. The Team Leader is Peter Karp, Forest Supervisor, Uinta National Forest. To help guide the development of the proposed management direction, the team first generated a desired habitat condition statement (DHC). The DHC is a portrayal of land conditions expected to result from implementing the proposed management direction. It describes the desired habitat quantity, quality and distribution for the northern goshawk and its prey that the agency intends to continuously strive for over time.

DESIRED HABITAT CONDITION: The habitat assessment by Graham et al. (1999, in press) states that all forested landscapes in Utah are potentially suitable as goshawk habitat for some portion of their life cycle (Conservation Strategy and Agreement for the Management of Northern Goshawk Habitat in Utah (HCS), page 4). Forested landscapes include those areas dominated by coniferous and aspen forest; but not woodlands such as pinyon-juniper.

In general, when forested landscapes of Utah are in a properly functioning condition they will provide excellent habitat for the goshawk and its prey (Graham et al. 1999, in press). Desired habitat attributes important to the home range of the goshawk and its prey, as stated in the HCS, include :

1. Diverse forest cover types with strong representation of early seral tree species dominate the landscape.

2. High quality habitat patches that are no more than 60 miles apart, preferably less than 20 miles apart, exist throughout landscapes (connected habitat).

3. Forested landscapes have 40% of the coniferous land area and 30% of the aspen land area dominated by large trees, well distributed. Large trees are defined based on the average size of trees found in the area and by the site potential.

4. Habitats for prey and other associated species are present to meet their needs as described by Reynolds el al. 1992 and Graham et al. 1999, in press (i.e., snags, down woody, cover, etc.).

5. A variety of structural stages as recommended by Reynolds et al. (1992) are present.

A balance of structural stages across the landscape is needed to ensure that the larger structural stages are sustained over time. Tree densities in the smaller structural stages should promote accelerated tree growth into the larger structural stages and maintain crown development important to meeting desired canopy closures in the larger stages. Outside of nest areas, it is desired to have open understories in the larger structural stages with trees irregularly spaced (Reynolds et al. 1992; Graham et al. 1999, in press).

An essential component of goshawk home range is goshawk nesting habitat. Nesting habitat and the associated post-fledgling family area are an important component in contributing to habitat connectivity across landscapes. This habitat is also important for the continuous recruitment of individuals (goshawks) into the population. Both habitat connectivity and continuous recruitment are important components for sustaining viable populations of the northern goshawk in Utah. Thus, it is desirable to have nesting habitat and the associated post-fledgling areas well-distributed within and across forested landscapes. Desired nest area habitat varies from the overall home range habitat in that it typically occurs in older-aged stands that have a higher density of large trees, high tree canopy cover, and higher understory tree density.

To understand relationships of these desired habitat conditions they must be viewed in scales at tens of thousands of acres or larger. Scales greater than hundreds of thousands of acres are too large to ensure that desired habitat connectivity attributes are sufficiently distributed.

Achieving desired habitat conditions requires the restoration and protection of degraded habitats, protection of native processes (Graham et al. 1999, in press), and maintenance of habitats already in desired conditions. Vegetative management should emphasize managing forest landscapes within their bio-physical limits and understanding how disturbances influence the resulting stand composition and structures (Graham et al. 1999, in press). Native species should be emphasized in forest management activities. Their persistence in landscapes gives the best indication of ecosystem sustainability because native species evolved with the disturbance events of the preceding several thousand years (USDA Forest Service, PFC, 1997).

The habitat outlook should be favorable for the goshawk and its prey when forest management emphasizes properly functioning condition, importance of large trees, maintenance and restoration of native processes, adaptive management, and the role of fire (Graham et al. 1999, in press).

WHERE THE PROPOSED MANAGEMENT DIRECTION WILL AND WILL NOT BE APPLIED: The proposed management direction will apply to National Forest System lands within the Ashley, Dixie, Fishlake, Manti-LaSal, Uinta, and Wasatch-Cache National Forests found in Utah, Wyoming and Colorado. This direction will apply to forested habitats across these National Forests except in the following areas:

(1) Designated wilderness areas;
(2) Administratively or Congressionally designated areas with a defined purpose (e.g., Research Natural Areas, National Recreation Areas, etc.);
(3) Areas currently managed or allocated for concentrated recreation use and development;
(4) National Forest System lands that are significantly influenced by lands in other ownership (e.g., high use urban interface areas); or,
(5) Areas currently managed or allocated for mining, special use permits allowing vegetative disturbance or treatments (vegetation will be managed to meet the intent of the permit), or administrative site uses and development.

In these areas, current forest plan direction will still apply. In addition, any valid, prior existing rights on National Forest System lands will not be affected by this proposal.

The proposed direction will not apply in areas described above because:

(a) the forested habitats in these areas are managed for other purposes as defined by current policy and regulations; or,
(b) the use permitted under the existing forest plan would not allow for the management of habitat as outlined in the proposed management direction; or
(c) the degree of influence resulting from adjacent lands in other ownership precludes application of this direction.

The agency believes that managing these areas consistent with current management direction is important to meeting other goals and objectives in the forest plan and that doing so would not result in the loss of habitat needed to maintain viable populations of goshawks in the State of Utah. A full disclosure of the effects of these exclusions will be clearly articulated and documented during the environmental analysis process.

While the proposed direction will not apply in these areas, their contribution to sustaining habitat components for the goshawk and its prey is still important and will need to be analyzed through the landscape assessment process, and their influence evaluated. For example, areas such as wilderness may provide suitable goshawk habitat which may influence how habitat attributes in areas outside the wilderness are managed through time. However, vegetation in the wilderness is managed to meet the goals of the wilderness resource which may or may not be contrary to suitable goshawk habitat.

PROPOSED MANAGEMENT DIRECTION FOR HABITAT OF THE NORTHERN GOSHAWK (Ashley, Dixie, Fishlake, Manti-LaSal, Uinta, Wasatch-Cache National Forests)

Note: (S) = Standard; (G) = Guideline

HOME RANGE (FORAGING, NEST AND POST-FLEDGLING AREAS)

Native Processes

GOAL: Restore or emulate natural disturbance regimes and other ecological processes to maintain or restore ecosystem integrity within landscapes important to sustaining habitat for the northern goshawk and its prey.

(G) Management actions should be designed to encourage conditions that are within the historic range of variation (HRV), remaining within the variability of size, intensity, and frequency of native disturbance regimes characteristic of the subject landscape and ecological processes.

(G) Within disturbed ecosystems, management actions should be designed to be consistent with restoration objectives.

Composition

GOAL: Maintain or restore the native characteristics of ecosystem composition important to sustaining habitat for the northern goshawk and its prey.

(G) Native plant species from locally adapted seed sources are preferred for use in all management activities. Non-native plant species have the potential to cause systems to move outside of historic range of variation (HRV), therefore the use of non-native species should be justified to indicate how their use is important to maintain or restore a cover type to functioning conditions.

(G) When initiating vegetative management treatments in forested cover types, provide for a full range of seral stages, by forested cover type, that achieve a mosaic of habitat conditions and diversity. Each seral stage should contain a strong representation of early seral tree species. Recruitment and sustainability of early seral tree species in the

landscape is needed to maintain ecosystem resilience to perturbations. While species composition may vary by location, an expected species mix is as follows:

COVER TYPE	EARLY SERAL	MID SERAL	LATE SERAL
Ponderosa Pine	PP = AS	PP>AS	PP>AS
Mixed Conifer (montane)	PP=AS>DF>BS>TF	PP=AS=DF>BS>TF	DF>BS>TF=PP>AS
Mixed Conifer (boreal)	LP>ES≥TF	LP=ES>TF	ES>LP>TF
Spruce / Fir	AS>ES>TF	AS=ES>TF	ES=TF>AS
Aspen	AS	AS	AS
Lodgepole Pine	LP	LP	LP>TF
Aspen/Lodgepole	AS>LP	LP=AS	LP>AS=TF

PP = ponderosa pine; AS = aspen; DF = Douglas-fir; TF = white or subalpine fir; LP = lodgepole pine; BS = blue spruce; ES = Engelmann spruce.
Equal sign (=): both species may be expected to be found within the cover type. Depending on site, either species may dominate or both may co-dominate the site.
Greater than (>): the first species would normally be expected to be more prevalent than the second species.

Structure

GOAL: Maintain or restore the mix of forest vegetative structural stages needed to sustain the desired mature and old forest stages in a landscape. The desired amount of mature and old is 40% in the portion of the landscape covered by conifers and 30% in the portion covered by aspen, well distributed. This is necessary to sustain habitat and habitat connectivity for the goshawk and its prey.

(G) Assess landscapes at the 5th-6th order Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) or equivalent ecological scale (tens to hundreds of thousands of acres), to determine distribution of forest vegetative structural classes. Use the best existing available information to complete this assessment. These assessments should be used to describe the existing structural conditions and then determine opportunities to move the existing conditions toward the desired structural habitat conditions.

(G) Planned vegetative management treatments (excluding unplanned and unwanted wildland fire) in the mature and/or old structural stages in a landscape that is at or below the desired percentage of land area in mature and old structural stages (40% conifer, 30% aspen), should be designed to maintain or enhance the characteristics of these structural stages. The percentage of land area in mature and old structural stages treated should not move out of the mature and old structural stage. Planned treatments may vary from this guideline if the action was assessed through the biological evaluation (BE) process, and the BE concluded that the action is consistent with the intent of the Conservation Strategy and Agreement for Management of the Northern Goshawk in Utah.

GOAL: Manage forested cover types within landscapes to retain, and sustain over time, standing dead trees (snags) and their distribution important to the habitat needs of goshawk prey species and characteristic of healthy, functioning ecosystems.

(G) When initiating vegetative management treatments in forested cover types, leave the following minimum number and size of snags. If the minimum number of snags is unavailable, green trees should be substituted. If the minimum size is unavailable, then use largest trees available on site. It is desirable to have snags represented in all size classes

above the minimum available on the site. The number of snags should be present at the stand level on average and, where they are available, distributed over each treated 100 acres. This distribution is needed to meet the needs of prey species that utilize this habitat.

COVER TYPE	**MINIMUM SNAGS** (per 100 acres)	**MINIMUM PREFERRED SIZE**
Ponderosa Pine	200	18"dbh / 30'ht
Mixed Conifer	300	18"dbh / 30'ht
Spruce / Fir	300	18"dbh / 30'ht
Aspen	200	8"dbh / 15'ht
Lodgepole Pine and Aspen/Lodgepole Pine	300	8"dbh / 15'ht

GOAL: Manage cover types within landscapes to retain down logs and woody debris and their distribution characteristic of healthy, functioning ecosystems. These habitat components are important to the habitat needs of goshawk prey species.

(G) When initiating vegetative management treatments, prescriptions should be designed to retain the following minimum amount and size of down logs and woody debris. These habitat components should be present at the stand level on average and, where they are available, distributed over each treated 10 acres. This distribution is needed to meet the needs of prey species that utilize this habitat.

COVER TYPE	**MINIMUM DOWN LOGS** (per 10 acres) (Down logs take precedence over tons of coarse woody debris)	**MINIMUM LOG SIZE** (Diameter / Length) (Mid-point diameter; or if minimum size not available, largest available on the site)	**MINIMUM COARSE WOODY DEBRIS, ≥3" DIAMETER** (Tons per 10 acres, inclusive of down logs)
Ponderosa Pine	30	12" / 8'	50
Mixed Conifer	50	12" / 8'	100
Spruce / Fir	50	12" / 8'	100
Aspen	50	6" / 8'	30
Lodgepole Pine and Aspen/Lodgepole Pine	50	8" / 8'	50

GOAL: In land areas dominated by mid-aged, mature, and old structural stages (VSS 4,5,6) within a landscape, maintain or restore canopy closure to provide habitat for the goshawk and its prey.

(G) When initiating vegetative management treatments in land areas dominated by mid-aged, mature, and old structural stages (VSS 4,5,6) within a landscape, treatments should be designed to maintain or restore an average of ≥40% canopy closure. If 40% canopy closure is not within the historic range of variation, manage for canopy closures that are consistent with HRV.

HOME RANGE (NEST AND POST-FLEDGLING AREAS ONLY)

GOAL: Provide well distributed habitat for successful goshawk nesting and brood rearing (post-fledgling area) within and across landscapes (5th-6th order HUC or equivalent ecological scale). This will provide for habitat connectivity across the state and continuous recruitment of individuals into the population, both of which are important to sustaining viable populations of goshawks.

(G) If a historic nest is not associated with an active nest area, management direction for home range habitat should be applied.
(S) When an active nest area has been identified, identify 2 alternate nest areas and 3 replacement nest areas. The next two guidelines provide recommended direction for implementation of this standard.

(G) Each nest area (active, alternate and replacement) should be approximately 30 acres (total of approximately 180 acres) in size when sufficient suitable habitat exists. If sufficient amounts of suitable habitat are not present, use existing suitable habitat that is available.

(G) Alternate nest areas should be identified in suitable habitat with similar vegetative structures as the active nest areas. Replacement nest areas should be identified in habitat which will develop similar vegetative structures as the active nest area at the time the active and alternate nest areas are projected to no longer provide adequate nesting habitat.

(S) Prohibit forest vegetative manipulation within active nest areas during the active nesting period. The active nesting period will normally occur between March 1st and September 30th.

(G) Restrict management activities and permitted human use (i.e., those activities for which a written permit is issued) in active nest areas during the active nesting period unless it is determined that the disturbance is not likely to result in nest abandonment. If the disturbance is likely to result in abandonment, a biological evaluation (BE) must be completed. To implement the action the BE must conclude that the action is consistent with the intent of the Conservation Strategy and Agreement for Management of the Northern Goshawk in Utah.

(G) Forest vegetative manipulation within active, alternate and replacement nest areas should be designed to maintain or improve desired nest area habitat. Use the active nest area habitat characteristics as an indicator of the desired nest area habitat, and as the best available information for nest area habitat for that cover type.

(G) Identify a Post-Fledgling Area (PFA) which encompasses the active, alternate and replacement nest areas and additional habitat needed to raise fledglings. A PFA should be approximately 420 acres in size (exclusive of nest area acres) when sufficient suitable habitat exists. If sufficient amounts of suitable habitat are not present, use existing suitable habitat that is available.

(G) Forest vegetative manipulation within the PFAs should be designed to maintain or improve the same habitat features as discussed for the goshawk home range (i.e., stand structure, snags, down logs, nest trees important in the life histories of the goshawk and its prey species common to the geographic location), except:

a) In VSS 4,5,6, provide canopy closure in excess of 50% when available. If 50% canopy closure is not within the historic range of variation, manage for canopy closures that are consistent with HRV.

b) Openings created as a result of mechanical vegetative treatments should not exceed the following by cover type:

COVER TYPE	MAXIMUM CREATED OPENING SIZE
Ponderosa pine and Mixed conifer	2 acres
Spruce/fir	1 acre
Aspen and Lodgepole pine	Follow current management direction

c) Management activities should be restricted during the active nesting period. The active nesting period will normally occur between March 1st and September 30th.

d) Where timber harvest is prescribed, plan a transportation system to minimize disturbance.

PROPOSED MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

ACTIVITIES, EFFECTS AND RESOURCES TO BE MEASURED	MONITORING METHOD	PRECISION/ RELIABILITY	MEASUREMENT FREQUENCY	REPORTING PERIOD	VARIATION WHICH WOULD CAUSE FURTHER EVALUATION AND/OR CHANGE IN MANAGEMENT DIRECTION.
Goshawk territory occupancy.	FOREST LEVEL: Whichever is greater: Random sample of at least 20 territories or 50% of all known territories.	Moderate/High	Annually	every 3 years	If monitoring reveals a 20% decline in territory occupancy over a 3 year period.
Goshawk habitat connectivity and Habitat diversity	FOREST SCALE: Use GIS to track the spatial location and size of the mature and old forest structure.	Moderate/High	Completion or update of a landscape assessment	5 years	FOREST SCALE: If a landscape scale assessment finds that less than 40% of the coniferous or 30% aspen forested area are dominated by mature and old structure patches.
Goshawk habitat diversity Snag Management	PROJECT SCALE: Monitor snag requirements for timber harvest and prescribed fire projects affecting forested habitat. Random sampling of 100 acres blocks which cover 10% or more of a project area.	Moderate/ Moderate	Annually sample 25% of completed projects	5 years	If 25% of the blocks sampled do not meet guideline requirements.
Goshawk habitat diversity Down Woody Material	PROJECT SCALE: Monitor down woody requirements for timber harvest and prescribed fire projects affecting forested habitat. Random sampling of 10 acre blocks which cover 5% or more of the project area.	Moderate/ Moderate	Annually sample 10% of completed projects	5 years	If 25% of the blocks sampled do not meet guideline requirements.

ALTERNATIVES: A range of alternatives will be considered. One of these will be the "no-action" alternative, which would continue current management under the current forest plans. Other alternatives will examine the effects of varying approaches that would maintain or restore functioning forested habitats across the aforementioned National Forests that are important to sustaining a viable population of the northern goshawk in Utah.

SCOPE AND LONGEVITY: The proposed management direction will only apply to National Forest System lands within the Ashley, Dixie, Fishlake, Manti-LaSal, Uinta, and Wasatch-Cache National Forests. New or revised management direction will apply until forest plans for the aforementioned National Forests are revised or suitably amended (projected to be 2-4 years). The proposed direction will not apply to projects that have been approved prior to the effective date of the amendments.

INVOLVING THE PUBLIC: During the scoping process, the Forest Service is seeking information and comments from Tribal Governments, Federal, State, and local agencies and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the proposed action. Please note, comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered. Pursuant to 7 CFR §1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted only in limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and when the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address.

A series of open houses will be held across Utah in February, 1999, to gain a better understanding of public issues and concerns, as follows:

2/16/99	Provo	12:00 - 2:00 pm	Historic County Courthouse, Room 319 51 S. University Ave.
2/16/99	Richfield	6:00 - 8:00 pm	Quality Inn 540 South Main
2/17/99	Panguitch	12:00 - 2:00 pm	Courthouse, Jeep Posse Room 55 East Center
2/17/99	Cedar City	6:00 - 8:00 pm	Sharwan Smith Ctr, Cedar Breaks Room, Southern Utah University
2/23/99	Vernal	12:00 - 2:00 pm	Forest Supervisor's Office 355 N. Vernal Ave
2/24/99	Moab	12:00 - 2:00 pm	Moab Information Center Center and Main
2/24/99	Price	6:00 - 8:00 pm	Prehistoric Museum, Classroom 155 East Main

2/25/99	Salt Lake City	12:00 - 2:00 pm 6:00 - 8:00 pm	Dept. of Natural Resources Conference Room A-B 1594 West North Temple

RELEASE AND REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT: It is anticipated that the environmental analysis will be completed and available for public comment in May, 1999. The Forest Service will publish a legal notice in the Utah papers of record announcing its availability as well as a Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**. The comment period is expected to be 30 days. A final decision is expected by late July, 1999. The decision on what management direction will be implemented, and reasons for the decision, will be documented in the decision document.

Information and updates concerning this proposal will be available electronically on the Project's website at www.fs.fed.us/r4/goshawk.

_____*/s/ Jack G. Troyer*_____ January 28, 1999
JACK G. TROYER
Deputy Regional Forester
Intermountain Region