



File Code: 1950

Date: January 24, 2005

Pleasant Grove, UT 84062

Dear Forest Interest:

Pleasant Grove Ranger District, Uinta National Forest, is initiating scoping and asking for public comment on a proposal to authorize the replacement of an aging water pipeline in Slate Canyon from the spring junction boxes to the storage reservoir located on the bench above Utah State Hospital.

Background

Utah State Hospital is the holder of a special-use permit (Permit PLG101401A) issued by the Uinta National Forest for the operation and maintenance of water collection and transmission facilities within an area known as Slate Canyon. A permit was first issued in 1937. A new permit was most recently issued in 2003 and will expire December 31, 2011. The permit covers 3.54 acres and/or 2.92 miles and is described as being located within portions of Sections 3, 8, 9, 10 and 17, Township 7 South, Range 3 East, Salt Lake Base Meridian.

The principal sources of culinary water for the Utah State Hospital are a group of springs located in Slate Canyon on the Uinta National Forest. Utah State Hospital has held water rights from these springs since the 1920s.

The pipeline that carries the water to the State Hospital is about 70-years old and is in poor condition. The existing 5-1/2-inch diameter cast-iron pipe is perilously thin-walled from corrosion over the years of service. In recent years, maintenance of the pipeline has become significant as deterioration continues.

About 1/2 mile of the pipeline is exposed in the road that runs up Slate Canyon or is suspended on the canyon walls. The pipeline experiences periodic leaks and ruptures both from the condition of the pipe and the exposure of some pipe sections to vandalism and natural events, such as rock fall and snow slides. Ruptures in the exposed sections of the pipeline have resulted in water loss and erosion from flowing water.

Proposed Project Description

The Forest Service is proposing to authorize the State of Utah to replace the entire water transmission pipeline from the spring junction boxes to the storage reservoir on the bench above Utah State Hospital. The new pipeline would be placed in the existing road alignment that follows the canyon bottom to the springs. Suitably designed air vents would be installed at optimum points along the pipeline alignment.

Typical construction details would include a rock excavation trench or a granular excavation trench. Much of the road bed is very rocky so the majority of the pipeline construction would



involve rock excavation. Rock in the roadbed would be broken up and removed because this material would be unsuitable for pipeline backfill. The waste rock would be placed adjacent to the existing road or disposed of according to Forest Service specifications. The granular material trench would use native backfill above the pipe; therefore, where granular excavation occurs less waste material would result.

Where the proposed replacement pipeline crosses the drainage channel, appropriate erosion-control apparatuses would be designed and installed for the design hydrologic event (preferably the 100-year, 6-hour storm). From preliminary survey information, it is estimated that 13 crossings of either the primary drainage channel in Slate Canyon or tributary, auxiliary channels would be needed. About ½-mile of the existing pipe is either exposed in the road or suspended from the canyon walls. These exposed sections of pipe would be removed. Buried sections of the old pipe would be left in place and abandoned.

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose and need of the proposed action are to

- Reduce the need for unscheduled pipeline maintenance and associated natural resource damage and disturbance from leaks because the 70-year old, 5 ½-inch cast iron pipeline is perilously thin-walled from corrosion.
- Reduce potential ruptures to the 70-year old, 5 ½-inch cast iron pipeline rupturing from vandalism and natural events, such as rock or snow slides, by burying a new pipeline in the existing road alignment.
- Remove sections of the existing pipeline that are exposed either suspended from the canyon walls or along the road to enhance the visual integrity of Slate Canyon.
- Provide a safer and more reliable delivery system of culinary water to the Utah State Hospital.

Decisions to be Made

The Pleasant Grove District Ranger will make the following decisions based on the interdisciplinary analysis:

- Whether to authorize the replacement of the water transmission pipeline located in Slate Canyon that is operated by Utah State Hospital to supply culinary to the State Hospital as proposed or modified.
- What mitigation measures are needed;
- What monitoring may be required.

Preliminary Issues

Issues initially identified during development of the proposed action include:

1. Effects on potential habitats for threatened, endangered or sensitive plant and wildlife species and/or migratory birds.
2. Effects on visual quality in Slate Canyon.

3. Effects on Rock Canyon/ Buckley Mountain Roadless Areas.
4. Effects on recreation visitors traveling on Trail #061 in Slate Canyon.
5. Effects on riparian areas.
6. Effects on soil and water quality.

Consistency with the Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan

The Slate Canyon area lies within the Lower Provo Management Area as identified in the 2003 Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (2003 Forest Plan). The 2003 Forest Plan states the following relative to the proposed project:

- Soil, air, and water resources provide for watershed health, public health and safety, long-term soil productivity, and ecosystem sustainability, and meet applicable laws and regulations. (FW-Goal 1 pg 2-1)
- Biologically diverse, sustainable ecosystems maintain or enhance habitats for native flora and fauna, forest and rangeland health, and watershed health. (FW-Goal-2, pg 2-1)
- Heritage resources are identified, preserved and enhanced. (FW-Goal-4, pg 2-1)
- Scenic quality and desired landscape character are maintained and/or enhanced. (FW-Goal-5, pg 2-1)
- Diverse and suitable recreational opportunities are provided responsive to public demand while maintaining ecosystem health and contributing to social and economic sustainability. (FW-Goal-6, pg 2-1)
- Forest Service activities, including those permitted by the Forest Service, maintain or enhance the long-term productivity and physical, chemical, and biological processes and functions of the soil. (FW-Sub-Goal 1-1, pg 2-2)
- Sufficient vegetation and litter are left on site to prevent soil movement and maintain soil productivity. (FW-Sub-Goal 1-3, pg 2-2)
- Management activities protect and maintain channel stability within the range of natural variability to the extent feasible and consistent with valid existing rights.
 - When channel changes or alterations are necessary, mitigation measures restore the aquatic habitat to as near natural condition as practical.
 - Where water flows could move rechanneled bank materials, bank stabilization measures may be necessary. (FW-Sub-Goal 1-10, pg 2-3)
- All activities on the Forest comply with state and federal clean water standards and applicable permitting processes. To the extent practical through management of activities on the Forest:

- Water chemistry is maintained in all surface water where the alkalinity will not be reduced more than 10 percent of baseline, and
- Management activities do not cause exceedances of State of Utah water quality standards (this monitoring is required by law) or increases in the listing of 303(d) streams. (FW-Sub-Goal 1-11, pg 2-3)
- Reclamation activities:
 - a. Stabilize the area,
 - b. Protect the aesthetics of the area,
 - c. Prevent water from off-site sources from impacting the disturbed area,
 - d. Control surface runoff to minimize erosion,
 - e. Trap sediment to enhance establishment of vegetation,
 - f. Restore and stabilize all unnecessary roads,
 - g. Include revegetation seeding or planting of local native species, and, where needed, fertilization and replacement of topsoil on all disturbed areas,
 - h. Provide maintenance of repeat applications where initial treatments do not achieve objectives, and
 - i. Prevent subsequent pollution from the site. (FW-Sub-Goal-2-45, pg 2-12)
- Streams are managed to provide self-sustaining fisheries by ensuring that sufficient habitat and water flow are available to support all life stages of native and desired non-native aquatic species. Where streams are managed to provide a recreational fishery, sufficient habitat is maintained to ensure that the stream's recreational values are maintained. (FW-Sub-Goal 2-19, pg 2-7)
- Reclamation activities are designed to provide for achieving desired future conditions for the management area(s) involved. (FW-Sub-Goal-2-44, pg 2-12)
- Appropriate access on established travel routes to the Forest boundary is assured through coordination with local jurisdictions. These travel routes include, but are not limited to, Rock Canyon, Slate Canyon, Battle Creek, Grove Creek, Nebo Creek, Bennie Creek, and White River (Left and Right Forks).

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

The following alternative has been developed to address the identified issues and will be considered in detail as part of the analysis.

No Action Alternative - Forest Service direction for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) states that a no-action alternative should be considered in

detail in each environmental analysis (FSH 1909.15). Under this alternative, Utah State Hospital would continue to use the existing water pipeline.

Public Involvement

You are invited to comment on the proposed action. Only those who submit timely and substantive comments will be accepted as appellants. Each individual or representative from each organization submitting substantive comments must either sign the comments or otherwise verify identity in order to attain appeal eligibility. Comments need to be as specific as possible and contain the following:

- Your name, address, and (if possible) telephone number;
- Title of the document(s) on which comment is being submitted; and
- Specific facts or comments along with supporting reasons that the person believes the Responsible Official should consider in reaching a decision.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project. Comments should include the information required pursuant to 36 CFR 215.6(a)(3), as published in the Federal Register on June 4, 2003.

Please send written comments to: Pamela J. Gardner, District Ranger, Pleasant Grove Ranger District, 390 N 100 E, Pleasant Grove, UT 84062; phone: 801-342-5241; fax: 801-785-6932. Email comments may be sent to **comments-intermtn-uinta-pleasantgrove@fs.fed.us**. Comments may also be delivered to the above address during regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, excluding federal holidays. The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of the notice for this project in the *Provo Daily Herald*.

Thank you for your interest in management of the Uinta National Forest. If you have questions regarding this proposal, please contact Marcy DeMillion, Natural Resource Manager, at the Pleasant Grove Ranger District Office, 390 N 100 E, Pleasant Grove, UT 84062, or by telephone at 801-785-3563.

Sincerely,

PAMELA J. GARDNER
Pleasant Grove District Ranger

Enclosure: Scoping Map