



File Code: 1950

Date: February 2, 2007

Dear Forest Interest:

The Pleasant Grove Ranger District, Uinta National Forest, in cooperation with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, is proposing to implement a watershed restoration and wildlife habitat improvement project along the Northern Wasatch Front from Grove Creek to American Fork Canyon. The project area follows the east boundaries of Pleasant Grove and Cedar Hills, Utah.

BACKGROUND

Historically, the Wasatch Front in Utah County was used by four-wheel-drive vehicles, off-road vehicles, and motorcycles for recreation. These motorized vehicles would travel on routes either constructed for a variety of access uses or created through repeated travel over the same course. In addition, some users would travel cross country or climb hills, leaving new tracks, sometimes referred to as pioneered roads, on the hillsides.

The Wasatch Front on the Uinta National Forest has been closed to motorized travel since the 1980s. Enforcement of the travel restrictions has been difficult because of the multiple access points and difficult terrain. The Uinta National Forest has an ongoing effort to control this unauthorized motorized travel and repair the environmental impacts.

Through partnerships with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, organizations, local communities, and interested citizens, significant improvements have occurred in the Dry Canyon to Grove Creek area along the Northern Wasatch foothills. This proposal would continue the important work to protect and restore the valuable resources on the Wasatch foothills from Battle Creek to American Fork Canyon.

The project area lies in critical big game winter range (2003 Forest Plan, p. E-1 and E-2). The 2003 Forest Plan designates the area as being within the following classifications:

- 3.2 Management Prescription, Watershed Emphasis
- Semi-primitive non-motorized Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
- Retention Classification for visual quality/scenery management objectives.



PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed project involves restoration on an estimated 25 miles of non-system (not on Forest Service road or trail system inventory) routes. The project location follows the east boundaries of Pleasant Grove and Cedar Hills, Utah, in portions of Sections 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16 and 22, Township 5 South, Range 2 East, Salt Lake Base Meridian. Activities associated with this proposal include:

- Scarifying non-system route surfaces to prepare a suitable bed for seeding and establishing native vegetation on undisturbed sites to break up compacted soils, slow water run-off and reduce off-site soil deposition.
- Creating drainage to divert runoff from the erosive non-system routes.
- Barricading unauthorized motorized entry points within the project area where access onto National Forest System lands from adjacent land currently contributes to impacts within the project area. A combination of barrier rock and post-and-pole fencing would be used to prevent unauthorized motorized travel.
- Posting signs stating the area is closed to unauthorized motorized travel.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The *Purpose* of the proposed action is to address the *Impacts* as identified above. The *Need* for the proposed action includes:

- Meeting the desired future condition of maintaining a healthy, productive watershed.
- Improving wildlife habitat quality and effectiveness in coordination with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.
- Eliminating the effects of unauthorized motorized travel.
- Restoring visual appearance to meet the scenery management objectives for this area resulting in a more natural-appearing landscape.

SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF ANALYSIS

At this time, we anticipate that the project will be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. The expected schedule for the analysis and project is as follows:

- Public review and comment on the proposed action begins with publication of a legal notice in the *Provo Daily Herald* and ends 30 days later.
- The environmental analysis to determine the environmental consequences of the proposed action completed and appropriate decisions made the summer of 2007.
- Project initiated in 2007. The project would be completed in phases and would be completed over three to five years, depending on available funding.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Your input will help determine the appropriate level of environmental analysis for this project. Please send comments relative to this proposal to the Responsible Official for this project, Pamela J. Gardner, District Ranger, Pleasant Grove Ranger District, 390 N 100 E, Pleasant Grove, UT 84062; phone: 801-785-3563; fax: 801-785-6932; or you may hand deliver your comments during normal business hours from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. E-mail comments may be sent to comments-intermtn-uinta-pleasantgrove@fs.fed.us. Emailed comments must be submitted in rich text (rtf.) or Word (doc.). Documents in other formats (tiff, jpg etc) should be mailed in hardcopy. The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of the legal notice for this project in the *Provo Daily Herald*. Your comments need to be as specific as possible and contain the following:

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

Thank you for your interest in management of the Uinta National Forest. For additional information about this proposal, please contact Marcy DeMillion at 801-342-5244.

Sincerely,

/s/ Pamela J. Gardner
PAMELA J. GARDNER
Pleasant Grove District Ranger

Enclosure: Project Area Map