

**VAST dba Woodford Snobusters Recreation Event Special Use Permit**

USDA Forest Service, Eastern Region, Green Mountain National Forest  
Manchester Ranger District  
Towns of Somerset and Woodford, Bennington and Windham Counties, Vermont

<b>File Code:</b>	1950-1
<b>Subject:</b>	VAST dba Woodford Snobusters Recreation Event Special Use Permit - Categorical Exclusion from Documentation in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement
<b>For:</b>	Project File

This memo for the file documents my decision to categorically exclude the issuance of the VAST dba Woodford Snobusters Recreation Event Special Use Permit from further analysis in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS). This action does not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Furthermore, this action fits a category for which a Decision Memo or project documentation is not required. According to 36 CFR 220.6(d), "a supporting record and a decision memo are not required, but at the discretion of the responsible official, may be prepared". Therefore, I have decided to establish a brief project file and document my decision on the proposed action in this memo.

**DECISION**

As District Ranger for the Manchester Ranger District of the GMNF, I am authorizing the VAST dba Woodford Snobusters Recreation Event Special Use Permit. The project is located on National Forest System (NFS) lands on the Airport Road in the Town of Somerset, Windham County, and on McKenna's Loop through Red Mill Campground, Town of Woodford, Bennington County, VT on the Manchester Ranger District of the Green Mountain National Forest. The authorization covers approximately 25 acres. The recreation event consists of a charity fundraiser in the form of a hot-dog roast for snowmobilers. Donations are requested, and all proceeds go to charity. It is a one day event scheduled for 2/21/2009. Also, an additional charity ride will be held 2/14/2009, beginning at McKenna's, and looping through the Red Mill campground. A report of attendance, monies raised, and proof of donation to charities must be made within 30 days of both events. Additional terms and conditions are included in an Operating Plan.

**REASONS FOR THE DECISION**

The hot-dog roast is a charity fundraiser in the form of a hot-dog roast for snowmobilers. Donations are requested, and all proceeds go to charity. In addition to the central activities at the Somerset Landing Strip, snowmobilers will be using the approved trails in the area. The event starts at noon and past monitoring (*William Garrison, personal communication*) indicates it generally lasts 2 hours. Permit provisions include site clean up, environmental protection, safety and sanitation. The Very Special People Ride is an opportunity for special needs people, especially children, to ride snowmobiles through the efforts of the Club and many volunteers. It is based on private land and consists of a loop ride on NFS lands. VAST dba Woodford Snobusters have been issued a temporary special use permit for these events each of the last 10 years. Monitoring has indicated that they have been in full compliance with the terms and

conditions of the special use authorization. The decision to authorize the VAST dba Woodford Snobusters Recreation Event Special Use Permit involves only administrative changes and does not involve changes in the authorized facilities or increase in the scope or intensity of authorized activities, or extensions to the term of authorization.

## **REASONS FOR CATEGORICALLY EXCLUDING THE DECISION**

Decisions may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment when they are within one of the categories found in 36 CFR 220.6(d), and there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the decision that may result in a significant individual or cumulative environmental effect.

### **Category of Exclusion**

Based upon the environmental analysis contained in the project file and on experience with similar activities on the GMNF, I have concluded that this decision can be appropriately categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment. I have determined that the selected action is a routine activity within the following categories of exclusion at 36 CFR 220.6(d)(8): "Approval, modification, or continuation of minor, short-term (1 year or less) special uses of National Forest System lands."

## **FINDING ON EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES**

The list of seven extraordinary circumstances that were examined for this analysis may be found at 36 CFR 220.6(b). The mere presence of one or more of these resource conditions does not preclude use of a categorical exclusion. It is the degree of the potential effects of a proposed action on these resource conditions that determines whether extraordinary circumstances exist. I have concluded that there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the decision that may result in a significant individual or cumulative effect on the quality of the human environment. My conclusion is based on information presented in this document and the entirety of the record.

## **FOREST PLAN CONSISTENCY**

National Forest Management Act (NFMA) requires the development of long-range land and resource management plans, and that all site-specific project activities be consistent with direction in the plans. The GMNF Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) was completed and approved in 2006 as required by NFMA. The Forest Plan provides direction for all management activities on the GMNF. The VAST dba Woodford Snobusters Recreation Event Special Use Permit implements the Forest Plan.

The project area is within the Diverse Forest Use Management Area (MA 3.1) as described in the 2006 Forest Plan. As required by NFMA Section 1604(i), I find this project to be consistent with the Forest Plan including goals, objectives, desired future conditions, and Forest-wide and MA Standards and Guidelines.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL AND IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

This decision is not subject to an administrative review or appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215 and the Earth Island Institute v. Ruthenbeck Ruling of October 19, 2005. This decision may be implemented immediately.

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 251 by those who hold or, in certain instances, those who apply for written authorizations to occupy and use National Forest System lands. An appeal for initial review may be filed by those who hold or, in certain instances, those who apply for written authorizations to occupy and use National Forest System lands. To appeal this decision under 36 CFR 251, a written Notice of Appeal, meeting the content requirements at 36 CFR 251.90, must be postmarked or received within 45 calendar days after the date of notice of this decision to applicants and holders of written authorization to occupy and use National Forest System land. However, when the 45-day filing period would end on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal Holiday, the filing time is extended to the end of the next Federal working day. The Notice of Appeal must be sent to: USDA, Forest Service, Green Mountain & Finger Lakes National Forests, ATTN: Forest Supervisor, 231 Main Street, Rutland, VT 05701. The Notice of Appeal may alternatively be faxed to: USDA, Forest Service, Eastern Region, ATTN: Forest Supervisor, 802-747-6766. A copy of the appeal must simultaneously be sent to the Team Leader. If an appeal is filed, I am willing to meet and discuss concerns. Additionally, if an appeal is filed, an oral presentation concerning the appeal (36 CFR 251.97) and/or stay of implementation (36 CFR 251.91) of the decision may be requested at any time prior to closing the appeal record.

**SIGNATURE AND DATE**

(For Alex Sienkiewicz) Erick Walker

Date: 12 February, 2009

ALEX SIENKIEWICZ  
District Ranger  
Manchester Ranger District

Attachment(s): Map of project area and pertinent resource specialist correspondence

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