



File Code: 1920/1950

Date: September 7, 2017

Dear Interested Party,

I am pleased to announce that the Columbine Ranger District has finalized the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the **Hermosa Creek Watershed Management Plan**. Because both planning and project-level decisions are being made, two Draft Decision Notices (DN) are being released at this time. The first DN is for the development of a Management Plan for the Hermosa Creek watershed and is covered by planning directives at 36 CFR 219. The second DN is for the approval of recreation and travel management projects within the watershed and is covered by directives at 36 CFR 218.

Plan-Level Decision

The San Juan Forest Supervisor, Kara Chadwick, will sign the plan-level DN. She intends to choose Alternative 2, the Proposed Action, with no changes. The decision will result in a Forest Plan amendment including: addition of watershed-specific Forest Plan components and allowable uses; alteration of mapped suitability for various uses and other mapped designations; adoption of a management plan for the Hermosa Creek Wilderness; and adoption of watershed-specific monitoring elements. Other non-discretionary administrative changes will be made to the Forest Plan at the same time, in order to comply with the Hermosa Creek Watershed Protection legislation.

Project-Level Decision

As Columbine District Ranger, I will sign the project-level DN. I intend to choose Alternative 2 Modified, the Proposed Action with two changes. The decision will include: designation of authorized types of motorized and mechanized vehicles and seasons of use on roads and trails; designation of over-snow open areas for motorized and mechanized vehicle use; identification of designated system trails; identification of the minimum road system, including maintenance levels, needed infrastructure, and unneeded roads; designation of where driving off-road and off-trail for camping is allowed; authorization of a developed campground and re-development of the trailhead in Hermosa Park; prohibition of dispersed camping along the Lower Hermosa Road 576; and required design criteria.

Document Availability

More details regarding both planning-level and project-level actions being proposed can be found in the Final EA and in the two Draft DNs. These documents are available on the web at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=43010>.

Pre-Decisional Objection Period

Regulations at 36 CFR Part 219 and 218 provide for a pre-decision administrative review rather than a post-decision appeal process. Each Draft DN being released at this time is subject to administrative review (objection). Details of the objection process for each DN are explained below.



Objection Process for the Plan-Level Decision

The Draft DN for the **Hermosa Creek Watershed Management Plan** is subject to administrative review (objection) pursuant to 36 CFR Part 219 Subpart B. Only those who previously submitted substantive formal comments specific to the Management Plan during designated scoping or comment periods have eligibility to file an objection to the draft decision under 36 CFR 219.53. Objections must be based on previously submitted substantive formal comments attributed to the objector unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the opportunities for formal comment. Incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided in §219.54(b). It is the objector's responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer pursuant to §219.56(c). All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process.

Objections, including attachments, must be in writing and filed with the Objection Reviewing Officer within 45 calendar days following the publication of a legal notice in the *Durango Herald* announcing the Opportunity to Object (36 CFR 219.56). Publication is anticipated to occur on September 9, 2017. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. Objections must meet the minimum content requirements listed in 36 CFR 219.54(c).

Plan-level objections, including attachments, must be in writing and filed with the Objection Reviewing Officer as follows:

Postal service and street delivery address:

Objection Reviewing Officer
US Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region
1617 Cole Blvd. Building 17
Golden, CO 80401

Hand-delivery is accepted Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays.

or FAX: (303) 275-5134

or Email: r02admin_review@fs.fed.us

Electronically mailed objections must be submitted in an email message, plain text (.txt), Word (.doc or .docx), Portable Document Format (.pdf), or Rich Text Format (.rtf) file formats.

Objection Process for Project-Level Decision

The projects documented in the Draft DN for the **Hermosa Creek Watershed Recreation and Travel Management Project** are subject to objection pursuant to Federal Regulations at 36 CFR Part 218, Subparts A and B. Objections, including attachments, must be in writing and filed with the Objection Reviewing Officer within 45 calendar days following the publication of a legal notice announcing the Opportunity to Object in the *Durango Herald*. Publication is anticipated to occur on September 9, 2017. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source.

Objections will be accepted only from those who have previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed projects during designated scoping or comment periods (36 CFR 218.5(a)). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunities (36 CFR 218.8(c)). Objections must contain

the minimum content requirements specified in §218.8(d); incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided in §218.8(b). It is the objector's responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer pursuant to §218.9. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process.

Project level objections, including attachments, must be in writing and filed with the Objection Reviewing Officer as follows:

Postal service and street delivery address:

Objection Reviewing Officer,
Forest Supervisor Kara Chadwick,
San Juan National Forest,
15 Burnett Court,
Durango, CO 81301

Hand-delivery is accepted Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays.

or via FAX: 970-385-1386

or via Email: r02f13admin_review@fs.fed.us

Electronically mailed objections must be submitted in an email message, plain text (.txt),

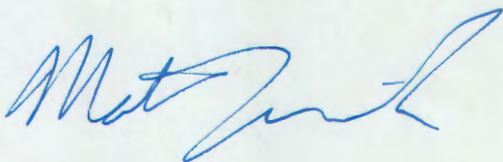
Word (.doc or .docx), Portable Document Format (.pdf), or Rich Text Format (.rtf) file formats.

Implementation Date

Implementation will occur under the Final DN's, which will be issued following the close of the Objection resolution periods (36 CFR 219.58 for planning-level components and 36 CFR 218.12 for project-level components). If no objections are received, implementation of the decisions may begin on, but not before, the fifth business day following the close of the objection filing periods (36 CFR 219.58(c) for planning-level components and 36 CFR 218.12(c)(2) for project-level components). If an objection is received, implementation may occur immediately following the close of the objection resolution period (36 CFR 219.58(a) for planning-level components and 36 CFR 218.12(a) for project-level components) once the Final DN's have been signed.

Additional Information

If you have any further questions or would like to discuss this project, feel free to contact Matt Janowiak or Cam Hooley at the Columbine Ranger District Office at 970-884-2512.



Sincerely,

MATT JANOWIAK
Columbine District Ranger