



**File Code:** 1950-1

**Date:** February 20, 2008

Dear Forest User:

The Pleasant Grove Ranger District, Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest, is proposing to re-route and rehabilitate several trails within the Tibble Fork Trail System (Mill Canyon (#040), Tibble Fork (#041), and Mud Spring Trails (#173), and install a foot bridge across the American Fork River. The project area is located on the Pleasant Grove Ranger District in Utah County, Utah, along the North Fork of American Fork River, east of Tibble Fork Reservoir. The legal description is: Township 4 South, Range 3 East, Sec. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 16, 15, 19, 20, and 21, Salt Lake Base Meridian.

The existing layout and lack of sustainable drainage structures, has created unsafe conditions, resource degradation, and unacceptable levels of sediment. A foot bridge is needed across the American Fork River upstream from Tibble Fork Reservoir to access the trail system safely from the trailhead.

## **BACKGROUND**

Mill Canyon (#040), Tibble Fork (#041), and Mud Springs Trails (#173) are highly utilized multiple-use trails. The trail system was originally created by sheep herders and sometimes follows drainage bottoms with steep sidewalls. During spring run off and heavy rainfall events, the trails develop a "canal effect", disrupting natural run off patterns and adversely impacting wetlands and riparian areas. Where channels have been incised or in areas that collected large amounts of water, parallel routes have been established to avoid the hazard creating a braided trail system causing even greater resource impacts.

Since these trails were inherited, several sections do not meet Forest Service standard, creating safety and environmental hazards. In previous years a closure order has been enacted by the Forest Supervisor during spring run off to address unsafe conditions and resource damage.

## **PROPOSED ACTION**

The proposed action would re-route portions of Mill Canyon Trail (#040), Tibble Fork Trail (#041), and Mud Springs Trail (#173) where the trails have been braided to avoid hazards and locate the trails to uplands out of wetland and riparian areas. Additional improvements would consist of drainage structures, tread work, retaining walls, rehabilitation of abandoned segments, and installation of a foot bridge across the American Fork River adjacent to the trailhead.



## **PURPOSE AND NEED**

The *Purpose* of the proposed action is to address public safety and natural resource degradation associated with trail sections that do not meet Forest Service standards creating drainage problems and resource damage due to their location in wetlands and riparian areas and insufficient drainage structures that interrupt the natural flow. The *Need* for the proposed action includes:

- Reduce the risk to human health and public safety;
- Eliminate parallel trails and user-created routes around hazardous areas;
- Improve water quality;
- Reduce erosion resulting from improper trail location;
- Reduce sediment loading with the watershed thus reducing fisheries impacts.

## **SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF ANALYSIS**

The project will be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement, subject to public involvement and the determination that no extraordinary circumstances exist (FSH 1909:15, 31.2).

The expected schedule for the analysis and project is:

- Public review and comment on the proposed action will begin 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 are planned to be completed and appropriate decisions made by the summer of 2008.
- The project will be completed in phases, as funding becomes available, and will be completed by 2011.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Your input will be helpful to determine the appropriate level of environmental analysis for this project. Please send substantive comments relative to this proposal to the Responsible Official for this project, John R. Logan, 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](mailto:comments-intermtn-uinta-pleasantgrove@fs.fed.us). 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-Wasatch-Cache National Forest. For additional information about this proposal, please contact Joe McFarlane, Recreation and Trails Manager at 801-342-5247.

Sincerely,

*/s/ John R. Logan*  
JOHN R. LOGAN  
District Ranger