



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Boston Mountain
Ranger District

TTY 479-667-1931

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Date: February 10, 2009

Dear Reader:

The Boston Mountain Ranger District is proposing to move an existing stream crossing on the Mill Creek Off-Highway-Vehicles (OHVs) trail system to a new location due to recent flooding in 2008 which has created hazardous conditions. This scoping letter serves as notification of the project to parties that would be affected or are interested in these types of activities. Please note that none of the activities will occur on private land. The proposed activities are referred to as the *Mill Creek Crossing Project*.

The spring flooding in 2008 severely damaged the existing crossing. Currently, the crossing has a deep hole that is unsafe for OHV riders and jeopardizes public health and safety. It is also contributing excess sediment to Mill Creek. The approach and exit at the new proposed crossing are not as steep and will not contribute as much sedimentation. The new crossing will utilize a bedrock section of streambed that would resist being washed out during flood events and be more stable and safe for the public.

The existing OHV trail and crossing total approximately 377.4-feet long by approximately 9-feet wide. Existing concrete logs will be removed and the trail approaching the stream on both sides will be decommissioned to prevent future use by OHVs. The proposed new crossing and connecting trail segment would be located 180-feet upstream and would utilize part of a user created trail. The dimensions are approximately 421.0-feet long by approximately 9-feet wide. The concrete logs from the existing crossing, along with additional new logs, would be utilized to harden the trail surface on both sides of the approach to the crossing. The concrete logs would be pinned into the rock streambed with metal anchors on each stream bank, eliminating the need for the concrete logs to span the entire streambed.

The project area is located in Section 28, Township 13 N, Range 27 W in Franklin County, Arkansas. On the next page is a map showing the proposed project area.

I anticipate that this proposal will fall under a categorical exclusion found in FSH 1909.15 Chapter 30 Sec. 31.2 (1): Construction and re-construction of trails. This project falls within the current framework of the Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (2005) for the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests. All applicable Forest Wide Standards have been incorporated for the protection of threatened, endangered and sensitive species as described on pages 3-7 through 3-11 of the Forest Plan.





- Proposed New Crossing - 421.0 ft
- Existing Crossing - Decommission 377.4 ft
- Mill Creek Stream Bed
- Mill Creek - Warmup Loop 2508F
- Mill Creek Trail "Blue Loop" - 27 miles

I invite your comments on this proposal. These comments will be used by an interdisciplinary team to develop issues and analyze the project. A decision document will then be prepared and mailed to those who commented on this project. In order to be most helpful, please return your comments referencing this project using the attached comment form by mail to the above address no later than 30 days after the publication of notice of this project in the *Southwest Times Record*, the newspaper of record for projects on the Boston Mountain Ranger District. Oral or hand-delivered comments must be received within our normal business hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., local time. You may also call or fax your comments to the numbers above, or email them to comments-southern-ozark-stfrancis-bostonmtn@fs.fed.us. All comments will become part of the project record available for public review. I appreciate your interest in this project.

A recent court order (*Earth Island Institute V. Ruthenbeck*, CIV F-03-6386 JKS) allows the public the opportunity to appeal certain CEs not previously subject to appeal. To have standing to appeal a decision resulting from this analysis, interested persons must submit comments on the proposed actions to me (deciding official) during the 30-day comment period beginning the day after publication of the legal notice of the availability of these scoping documents in the *Times Record*.

Sincerely,
/s/ Gary E. Williams

GARY E. WILLIAMS
District Ranger

Name: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____ Phone: _____

Comments:

Please mail your completed comment form to 1803 North 18th Street, Ozark, AR 72949.
Comments are also accepted verbally at 479-667-2191 or by email at comments-southern-ozark-stfrancis-bostonmtn@fs.fed.us. Your input is important.