



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

White Mountain National Forest  
Ammonoosuc/Pemigewasset  
Ranger District

Route 175, RFD #3, Box 15  
Plymouth, NH 03264  
Comm: (603) 536-1315  
TTY: (603) 536-3287

---

File Code: 1950

Date: May 24, 2004

Dear Planning participant,

The Ammonoosuc/Pemigewasset Ranger District of the White Mountain National Forest is in the process of finalizing the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Ramsey Basin Project. Enclosed for your comment is the Information for Notice and 30-Day Comment on Proposed Activities for the Ramsey Basin Project. This information document examines the alternatives considered for this project, provides the mitigation measures to limit potential effects, and summarizes the analysis of potential environmental effects associated with each alternative considered in detail (Comparison of Alternatives, pp. 18-26).

I am requesting your comments now, because I believe we are at a point in our analysis where your input will be the most useful and meaningful. As you review the **Information for 30-Day Comment**, please consider the alternatives, the analysis of environmental effects, and the mitigation measures. Your comments must be **timely and substantive** to assure that I have the opportunity to consider them before we complete the analysis and I make a decision on this project.

This is the formal 30-day public comment period. To attain standing to appeal any decision I make on this project proposal, you must submit timely and substantive comments regarding the Information for 30-Day Comment during this period. **There will be no other public comment period for this project proposal.** Instructions for submitting your comments and establishing standing to appeal my decision are included in the attachment to this letter (How to Comment on the Ramsey Basin Project EA). Please review these instructions carefully.

The alternatives propose the following range of management activities:

- Timber harvest of up to 1.4 million board feet on up to 298 stand acres of federal land, utilizing both even-aged and uneven-aged management techniques; and
- Perform maintenance on up to 1.6 miles of existing Forest Service roads.

Please be aware that your name, address and comments will become part of the public record and may be available for public inspection. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this process. Your comments and involvement are important to me. If you



have any questions please contact Steve Wingate at 603-536, 1315. I look forward to hearing from you.

This information document will be available on the White Mountain National Forest web site ([www.fs.fed.us/r9/white](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/white)).

Also included as an attachment to this letter is Where in the Forest Service NEPA Process is this Project?, which provides an outline of the NEPA process and explains where we are in the process at this time.

Sincerely,

/s/ John J. Serfass  
JOHN J. SERFASS  
District Ranger

## ***How to Comment on the Ramset Basin Project 30-Day Comment Information***

In June 2003, the USDA-Forest Service issued new implementing regulations (Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 215) for notice, comment and appeals. The following instructions incorporate these changes. The new regulations allow only those who submit ***timely and substantive*** comments to be eligible to appeal my final decision. To assure that I receive and can consider your comments in my decision, please review these instructions carefully.

***TO BE TIMELY*** your comments must be received within 30 calendar days following the publication of the legal notice in the Union Leader. When the comment period ends on a Saturday, Sunday or Federal holiday, comments will be accepted until the end of the next Federal working day. If you do not have access to the Union Leader, please call the Ammonoosuc-Pemigewasset Ranger Station at 603-536-1315 (TTY 603-536-3281) for the published date.

***TO BE SUBSTANTIVE*** your comments must be within the scope of the proposed action, specific to the proposed action, have a direct relationship to the proposed action and include supporting reasons as to why I should consider your comments in the EA and my decision. Substantive comments should enhance the project analysis and provide meaningful and useful information about your concerns.

It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period. Individuals and organizations wishing to be eligible to appeal must provide the following information:

- 1) Name, address and telephone number;
- 2) Title of the proposed action (Ramsey Basin Project);
- 3) Specific substantive comments on the proposed action, along with supporting reasons the Deciding Official should consider in reaching a decision; and
- 4) Signature or other verification of identity upon request; identification of the individual or organization who authored the comments(s) is necessary for appeal eligibility;

Comments should be directed to Ammonoosuc-Pemigewasset District Ranger John Serfass as follows:

- Written comments must be postmarked by the Postal Service, e-mailed, Faxed or otherwise submitted by 11:59 pm ET on the 30<sup>th</sup> calendar day following publication of the legal notice.
  - Letters should be submitted to John Serfass, District Ranger, Attn: Ramsey Basin Project – Sue Wingate, 1171, Rt. 175, Holderness, NH 03245. Hand delivered letters should be submitted during these office hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm;
  - FAX comments should be sent to 603-536-5147; and
  - E-mail comments should include an identifiable name and be sent to: ([comments-eastern-white-mountain@ammo-pemi@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-eastern-white-mountain@ammo-pemi@fs.fed.us))Comments submitted as electronic documents must be in plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rft) or Word (.doc) format. When you submit your comments to this e-mail address, you should receive an automated electronic acknowledgement as confirmation of receipt. If you do not receive acknowledgement, it is your responsibility to ensure timely receipt by other means.
- Oral comments may be submitted Monday through Friday 8:00am to 4:30pm, either by phone (603-536-1315) or in person; and must be received by the close of business on the 30<sup>th</sup> calendar day following publication of the legal notice.

## **Where in the Forest Service NEPA Process is the Ramsey Basin Project?**

NEPA is the Forest Service decision-making process. An acronym for the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, NEPA provides opportunities for interested parties to give their ideas and opinions about resource management. This input is important in helping us identify resource needs, which will shape the alternatives evaluated and lead to the formation of a decision.

This form shows the steps of the NEPA process, and where the Ramsey Basin Project is in that process.

### **Step One - Need for a Project**

The Forest Service or some other entity may identify the need for a project.  
*YOU* may bring the need for a project to the attention of the Forest Service.

### **Step Two - Develop Project Proposal**

The Forest Service or a project proponent develops detailed, site-specific proposal  
*YOU* may be proponent who develops proposal or *YOU* can share input and ideas

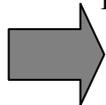
### **Step Three - Scoping (Public Input)**

The Forest Service solicits public input on the site-specific proposal to define the scope of environmental analysis and range of alternatives to be considered  
*YOU* provide site-specific input: suggest issues, alternatives, mitigation measures

### **Step Four - Develop Reasonable Range of Alternatives**

If proposal fits categorical exclusion: Forest Service makes & documents decision  
If scoping determines need for EA or EIS: Forest Service develops alternatives  
*YOU* suggest alternatives to the proposed action during the scoping process

### **Step Five – 30-Day Formal Public Comment Period (Ramsey Basin Project 30-Day Comment Information)**



Forest Service performs analysis of environmental effects, identifies preferred alternative, solicits formal public comment (30-Day Comment Period)  
*YOU* provide timely & substantive comments on the analysis during Comment Period

### **Step Six – Environmental Analysis & Decision**

Forest Service finalizes the Environmental Assessment and makes decision to implement one of the alternatives  
*YOU* can review decision; you can appeal if you disagree and you have “standing”  
*Standing: You provided substantive comments during formal period (Step 5)*

### **Step Seven - Appeal**

Forest Service allows public 45 days following legal notice of decision to appeal  
*YOU* may file formal Notice of Appeal

### **Step Eight - Implementation**

Forest Service implements the project  
*YOU* may contribute labor, equipment or funding to implement the project

### **Step Nine - Monitor and Evaluate**

Forest Service monitors and evaluates project results  
*YOU* provide feedback on the project to the Forest Service