

News Release

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USDA Forest Service
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GMUG Proposed Forest Plan Released

DELTA, Colo., March 15, 2007 – Charlie Richmond, Forest Supervisor for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) announced today the release of the Forest’s proposed Land Management Plan (proposed Plan). The proposed Plan is the product of several years of collaborative efforts and reflects the substantial public involvement that helped shape the desired management of the GMUG National Forests into the future.

“It is our job to provide a balanced mix of uses while maintaining ecological values and the long-term productivity of the land,” said Richmond, “We feel that this proposed Plan does a good job of reflecting the work and desires of those involved with its preparation and we want folks to take the time to review the information and give us their feedback.”

“We spent many hours in nearly 85 public meetings, workshops and open houses talking with as many as 2,000 stakeholders about issues, desired conditions, suitable uses, and other Plan components. We also discussed management challenges and key findings from the technical resource assessments,” said Carmine Lockwood, Planning Staff Officer. “Our efforts to bring diverse interests together have allowed us to build relationships with stakeholders and identify some common ground on some tough issues.”

The release of the proposed Forest Plan was delayed to provide more consistency and complete internal reviews, which has resulted in a better product for public review and comment. The extra time ensured that:

- the Plan meets the intent of the 2005 Planning Rule and the National Energy Policy Act;
- it’s an effective plan for the GMUG;
- it’s more consistent with other plans that have been developed under the 2005 Rule; and
- it provides better clarity in the presentation of the information in the Plan.

The public will have 90 days to comment on the proposed Plan and the associated documents once the Notice of Availability is published in the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel (Newspaper of Record). A Notice of Availability will also be published in the Federal Register.

Charlie Richmond summarized his comments stating, “We have developed a Proposed Forest Plan that describes a reasonable picture of what the public might expect to see on the Forest in the next 15 years. We look forward to continuing our work with stakeholders to refine this Plan for the future of the Forest, and with the hope of issuing the revised Forest Plan by the end of this year.”

Five public open-house style meetings will be held in a variety of locations across the forest to provide information and a forum to ask and answer questions. Each meeting will be held between 5:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., and will include a brief plan overview presentation followed by an open house forum. Please plan to attend one of the following meetings:

Hotchkiss, April 12 (Thursday), 5:30-8:30 pm
Hotchkiss Public Library, First and Main

Norwood, April 17 (Tuesday), 5:30-8:30 pm
Norwood Community Center, 1670 Naturita

Montrose, April 19 (Thursday), 5:30-8:30 pm
Montrose Pavilion, Pavilion Way

Grand Junction, April 25 (Wednesday) 5:30-8:30 pm
Country Inn of America, 718 Horizon Way

Gunnison, April 26 (Thursday), 5:30-8:30 pm
Gunnison County Fairgrounds-Multi-Purpose Room
275 South Spruce, Gunnison

The proposed Plan, Comprehensive Evaluation Report (CER) and additional information is available on the Forest's Website at: www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug/policy/plan_rev.

The public is encouraged to provide written comment(s) on the proposed Plan during the 90-day comment period. Comments on the GMUG Proposed Forest Plan should be sent to:

GMUG Forest Plan Revision Team
2250 Hwy 50
Delta, Colorado 81416

Comments by email (with your mailing and contact information) should be sent to:

R2_GMUG_planning@fs.fed.us

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