



State of Utah

Department of Natural Resources

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17 October 2007

Carolyn Wright
Public Lands Policy Coordination
Office of the Governor
5110 State Office Building
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-1107

Subject: Big Creek Vegetation Treatment

Dear Carolyn:

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) has reviewed the information and maps provided by the USFS regarding the Big Creek Vegetation Treatment Project proposed by the Forest Service located in Rich County. We provide the following comments for your review:

UDWR biologists reviewed the draft EIS and visited the project site on the ground. The UDWR is supportive of Alternative 1 to help accomplish the vegetation restoration and habitat improvement that is needed in this area. The treatments proposed have sound scientific grounding and the implementation of these practices should accomplish the desired effect. Tree thinning, prescribed burns and mechanical sage treatments are all acceptable practices if done correctly and should provide an opportunity for vegetative diversity and habitat improvement.

The Big Creek project area has been identified by UDWR as Crucial Summer habitat for mule deer and elk. This proposed project would improve vegetation structure and pattern for the cover types described. The identified issues related to sensitive species and other wildlife species within the draft EIS were review by UDWR sensitive species and wildlife biologists. UDWR biologists found that the EIS adequately identified and covered these issues.

The UDWR supports the USFS in proceeding with alternative 1. The No Action alternative will not provide needed improved of wildlife habitat conditions. The reduced action "wildlife" alternative, even though directed towards wildlife, can be made better by completing all the acres and projects identified in alternative 1.

Ms. Carolyn Wright

March 20, 2008

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Thank you for the opportunity to review this proposed action and provide comment. If you have any questions, please call Scott Walker, Habitat Program Manager, at our Ogden office (801-476-2776).

Sincerely,

James F. Karpowitz

Director

JFK/SW