



File Code:2320

Date:March 18, 2005

Dear Forest Users:

Thank you for your continued interest in the Ashley and/or Wasatch-Cache National Forests. Your comments are critical to the management of the National Forest and your commitment is appreciated. We are considering a Forest Special Order that we would like to share with you.

Forest Special Orders are regulations issued by Forest Supervisors for a specified purpose and period of time. They may apply to an entire Forest or to a specific location(s) to solve a particular resource problem. They are a tool to help solve local problems on the Forest and are issued with careful consideration.

We would like your thoughts on the following Forest Special Order affecting campfire use and firewood collection in the High Uintas Wilderness:

Campfires and firewood collection would be prohibited within ¼ mile of lakes in the following areas of the High Uintas Wilderness:

SOUTH SLOPE		NORTH SLOPE
Naturalist Basin	Brown Duck Basin	Middle Basin
Pigeon Milk Area	Swasey Hole	Amethyst Basin
Granddaddy Basin	Garfield Basin	Deadhorse Lake
Four Lakes Basin	Atwood Basin	Lower Red Castle Lake
Squaw Basin	Chain Lakes Basin	Dollar Lake
Upper Rock Creek	Upper Uinta Canyon	Henry's Fork Lake

This order would affect less than 10% of the High Uintas Wilderness, but it includes most popular destinations and could affect many visitors. Campfire restrictions have been in use for many years in the High Uintas Wilderness on the Wasatch-Cache National Forest. This order would expand those restrictions.

This order includes locations on both the Ashley and Wasatch-Cache National Forests and would replace two existing orders for campfire restrictions on the Kamas and Evanston-Mountain View Ranger Districts of the Wasatch-Cache National Forest. The existing orders have differing setbacks for campfires. The new order would supersede both of the existing orders and make campfire setbacks consistent throughout the closed areas, making them less complicated for visitors.

Kamas Ranger District. The existing order prohibits campfires and wood collection entirely within Naturalist Basin and the Pigeon Milk Spring area. The new order would reduce the closure areas to within ¼ mile of lakes in these areas and Pigeon Milk Spring. This is not expected to affect existing conditions.



Evanston-Mountain View Ranger District. The existing order prohibits campfires and wood collection within 1000 feet of Henry's Fork, Dollar, and Lower Red Castle Lakes. The new order would expand the closure areas to within ¼ mile (1320 ft) of these lakes. This is not expected to affect existing conditions.

The following are some of our reasons for considering the new Forest Special Order (see attachment for more information):

- Down and dead wood (firewood) is becoming depleted in popular camping areas.
- Firewood is very slow to recover in high elevation ecosystems.
- Firewood is important to some natural ecological functions and aesthetic quality.
- Wilderness is managed such as to protect natural conditions.
- Once firewood becomes scarce, some visitors strip or fall standing trees (dead and live).

We would like to implement the Forest Special Order on June 1, 2005. The Forests will conduct information outreach efforts, should we decide to issue the order. Please provide written comments to us at the addresses below. Your comments would be most helpful if received by **April 20, 2005**. Ken Straley on the Ashley National Forest and Bernard Asay on the Wasatch-Cache National Forest can answer specific questions about this proposal at (435) 781-5204 and (307) 782-6555, respectively.

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Or, e-mails may be sent to: comments-intermtn-ashley@fs.fed.us.

Thank you for being interested and involved in the management of your National Forests.

Sincerely,

THOMAS L. TIDWELL
Forest Supervisor,
Wasatch-Cache National Forest

/s/ EILEEN RICHMOND
EILEEN RICHMOND
Acting Forest Supervisor
Ashley National Forest

Enclosures: