



**Scoping Document
June 4, 2008**

Small Project Proposals

**USDA Forest Service
Wasatch-Cache National Forest
Logan Ranger District
Cache County, Utah**

**Comments Due:
July 7, 2008**

The Purpose of this Scoping Document

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of four individual small projects we are proposing for the Logan Ranger District. You received similar letters in the past, discussing projects we proposed at that time. This letter discusses four new small project proposals for the Logan District. The environmental effects of the proposed projects are being analyzed by Forest resource specialists (including water, soils, wildlife, cultural resources, visuals, recreation, and fisheries) individually and cumulatively in relation to one another. However, there will be a separate decision made on each individual proposal. We welcome your comments, concerns, and suggestions regarding these proposals.

The Logan Ranger District has made a preliminary assessment that these proposals fall within categories of actions listed in the Forest Service NEPA Handbook that are excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement and that no extraordinary circumstances exist that would preclude use of the category. The following list provides brief project descriptions and contact information. Additional information on these projects is available from the Logan Ranger District.

What projects are being proposed?

The following projects are proposed for implementation on the Logan Ranger District. The information below gives you the **general** location and provides a **brief** summary of the project. **If you have questions or want more information please contact the project manager listed, at the Logan Ranger District Office.**

1. Brigham Bowmen Special Use Permit Re-issuance

Project Manager: Connie McCaughey

Location: South of Mantua, Utah

Legal Description: T9N, R1W Section 27

Proposed Category: Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 - Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook, Chapter 30, Section 31.2 Category 15

The Brigham City Archery Club (Brigham Bowmen) desires to renew its special use permit for operation of an archery/target shooting range located on National Forest. The permitted area is 11.25 acres. The original permit was issued in 1955; their current permit expired in 1996. The permit re-issuance would cover the same area and facilities as previously authorized, including use of the target range (a path and targets) and a pit toilet. The permittee has been in compliance with the terms and conditions of the permit and has paid all fees. There will be no changes to the authorized facilities or increases in the scope or intensity of authorized activities.

2. Cook Ranch Irrigation Ditch Special Use Permit Re-issuance

Project Manager: Ron Vance

Location: North Cheney Creek

Legal Description: T13N, R4E Sections 11, 12

Proposed Category: Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 - Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook, Chapter 30, Section 31.2 Category 15

The special use permit for this irrigation ditch, originally issued in the early 1950's and most recently reissued in the 1990's, has expired. There has been a change in ownership back to previous owners and they desire to have the permit reissued. The ditch begins in the North Fork of Cheney Hollow and continues to the east to farm land in Section 13 of T13N, R4E. There will be no changes to the allowed uses or other conditions in the re-issuance.

3. Long Hollow Gravel Pit

Project Manager: Mike Van Horn

Location: Long Hollow Road

Legal Description: T12N, R3E Section 24

Proposed Category: Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 - Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook, Chapter 30, Section 31.2 Category 3

This project proposes this location as a gravel source for maintenance of forest roads. The gravel would be used for general road maintenance in the Temple Fork, Long Hollow, and Dip Hollow vicinities. The area would be surveyed for TES plant/wildlife species and heritage resources before approval and a pit plan would be developed before any gravel is removed. The area of use would be less than 5 acres in size.

4. Left Hand Fork of Blacksmith Fork Riparian Improvement

Project Manager: Paul Chase

Location: Left Hand Fork of Blacksmith Fork

Legal Description: T11N R3E Sections 20, 21, 29, 30 and T11N R2E Sections 25, 26, 34, and 35

Proposed Category: Forest Service Handbook 1909.15 - Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook, Chapter 30, Section 31.2 Category 7

The Blacksmith Fork River is an important fishery in northern Utah and is currently considered a Utah Blue Ribbon Fishery. The Left Hand Fork of the Blacksmith Fork supports the largest remaining population of Bonneville cutthroat trout in the Blacksmith Fork drainage. It also provides habitat for brown trout and brook trout.

The Left Hand Fork is paralleled the majority of its length by Forest Service Road 245. This is a popular area for a variety of recreation activities, including fishing, camping, and ATV-riding. Many forest visitors enjoy camping along the stream. Most of the campsites along the Left Hand Fork are in favorable locations, far enough away from the water to avoid impacts to the stream.

However, some of the camping spots are directly within the "riparian" area (identified as land directly adjacent to and influenced by water such as lakes and streams). These riparian ecosystems support unique vegetation and animal communities associated with wet areas. Riparian vegetation helps to stabilize stream-banks, filters sediment from entering streams, and provides streamside shade to keep water temperatures cool for quality fish habitat.

In some of the more popular areas close to the stream, multiple campsites and ATV-riding between campsites has caused large areas of compacted soil and extensive loss of riparian vegetation. As soil is compacted from extensive camping and motor vehicle use, grasses, plants and shrubs die off and bare soil is exposed. Some of this bare soil, in turn, erodes downward, adding sediment to the stream and impacting fish habitat. Also, in some of these spots, streamside vegetation (including willow and dogwood, which provide shade to keep the water cooler for quality fish habitat) has died back, due to trampling and/or cutting.

Although ATV use is not allowed in camping areas (they are only allowed on designated roads and trails, as shown on the Logan District Travel Map) ATV use between campsites is becoming increasingly apparent by the number of new, unauthorized routes that appear each year. These routes add to the amount of exposed bare ground and are additional sources of sediment to the stream.

Proposed Action

In order to maintain a healthy stream, riparian habitat, and a quality fishery in the Left Hand Fork, as well as a pleasant place for recreation, something needs to be done to reduce the loss of riparian vegetation and the amount of sediment reaching the stream. The Left Hand Fork riparian improvement project is being proposed to initiate this process. Under this proposal, barrier rock and buck and pole fencing would be strategically placed to keep camping and motorized vehicles back away from the stream. Stream-bank and riparian habitat areas would be restored through seeding, mulching, and the planting of native seedlings/cuttings.

Two of the larger camping areas in Left Hand Fork receive heavy use on many weekends during the summer, and each may have as many as 12-15 occupied spots. Some of these are located directly within the riparian area. Under the proposal, barrier rock would be placed about 100-200 feet from the stream (depending on the lay of the land), allowing camping only outside of the riparian area. Foot traffic would continue to be allowed down to the stream.

Some of the benefits derived from encouraging camping outside the riparian areas would include increased stream-bank stability, improvement of water quality, enhancement of wildlife and fish habitat, and improvement of the fishing and camping experience.

Preliminary Issues

1. Effects to the human environment (including water quality, wildlife, vegetation, soil, cultural resources, fisheries, air quality, scenery, and recreation)
2. Effects on Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive species, including plants and wildlife

What is the Decision to be made?

The decision to be made is whether or not to implement the proposed project and if so, to what specifications, level or degree.

Who will make the Decision?

The District Ranger is the official responsible for making the decision. The projects would be implemented beginning in summer 2008.

When do we need your Response?

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments on any of the above projects should be received by **July 7, 2008**. Written comments should be submitted to: Jennefer Parker, District Ranger, 1500 East Highway 89, Logan, Utah 84321. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:00am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Oral comments must be provided at the Responsible Official's office during normal business hours via telephone (435) 755-3620 or in person. Electronic comments should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf) or Word (.doc) to comments-intermtn-wasatch-cache-logan@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,
/s/Jennefer Parker

June 4, 2008

JENNEFER PARKER
Logan District Ranger

Date

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