



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>

Media Contact: Aaron Voos, (307) 745-2323

Comment Period to Begin for West Side Snowy Range Travel Management

(SARATOGA, Wyo.) Aug. 5, 2016 – Local U.S. Forest Service (USFS) officials are seeking input on the Environmental Assessment and Alternatives for the West Side Snowy Range Travel Management Project.

The comment period will run from Aug. 5-Sept. 6 and will be paired with public open houses in Carbon County, Wyo.

Comments should specifically address the project alternatives, based on the recently-completed Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA analyzes the environmental impacts of the alternatives, within the framework of the purpose and need for the project.

Alternative actions were released separately from the EA last summer, so that interested parties would have time to physically review the options in person.

The Environmental Assessment and its appendices (maps and tables) are located on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests & Thunder Basin National Grassland web site at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=40299>.

The Forest Service has provided information on this project directly to interested individuals and local agencies, as well as to Wyoming State agencies and departments, tribes and other federal agencies. Specific communication with the County has continued throughout the project process, regarding potential solutions to issues with Forest Road 261.

A team of specialists with the Medicine Bow National Forest analyzed three project alternatives in the Environmental Assessment – No Action, Modified Proposed, and Less Roads.

Analysis was accomplished by field observations and surveys, past experiences and professional recommendations, aerial photography, resource modeling, literature review, information obtained through monitoring, Forest Plan direction and associated analysis, and public participation.

Ultimately, the environmental assessment did not identify any significant environmental effects from the action alternatives.

Staff from the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District will be hosting three open houses in early August to distribute information on the EA and alternative actions for the Travel Management project.

Comments will be accepted at the open houses and information on the project will be available. USFS personnel will be on hand to answer questions. Dates and locations are as follows:

Elk Mountain/Hanna/Medicine Bow/Arlington

Monday, Aug. 15, 6-8 p.m., at the Elk Mountain Senior Center, 208 Bridge St.

Rawlins

Thursday, Aug. 18, 6-8 p.m., at the BLM – Rawlins Field Office, 1300 North Third St.

Saratoga/Encampment

Friday, Aug. 19, 6-8 p.m., at the Platte Valley Community Center, 210 Elm

Alternative development was a collaborative effort last summer between local, state, and federal groups. Options were derived from the initial USFS proposed action and more than 250 public comments that were received regarding the proposal.

Following agency response to comments and any subsequent changes, a decision on the project can be expected later in 2016.

In line with national travel management direction, the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District (BCH) began analyzing the existing road/trail system for 210,000 acres on the west side of the Snowy Range, Medicine Bow National Forest, in 2013.

Ultimately the process is meant to produce a sustainable motorized road and trail system that will meet public/management needs, while maintaining viable natural resources.

District Ranger Melanie Fullman is available to answer questions at the District office number, (307) 326-5258, or via email, mfullman@fs.fed.us. Interested parties can also stop by the BCH District office at 2171 S. Highway 130 in Saratoga between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Mon. – Fri.

Comments can be submitted by mail, fax, over the phone, in person, or by email. Comments, names, and contact information of those who comment will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, the District will not be able to send subsequent environmental documents to anonymous commenters.

Written comments should be submitted to: Medicine Bow National Forest, Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District, Attn: Melanie Fullman, 2171 Highway 130, PO Box 249, Saratoga, WY 82331, or fax: 307-326-5250.

Oral and hand-delivered comments must be provided at the District Office during normal business hours. Telephone comments can be submitted to Ranger Fullman at 307-326-5258.

Electronic comments must be submitted to comments-rm-medicine-bow-routt-brush-creek-hayden@fs.fed.us in an email message, or portable document format (.pdf) or Word (.docx) format.

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