



**DECISION MEMO**  
**LONE ROCK VFD WATER TANK PROJECT**  
**Region 8, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture**  
**Sylamore Ranger District, Ozark-St. Francis National Forests**  
**T. 17N, R. 12W, Sec. 4, Baxter County, AR**

**Background**

The Lone Rock Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) has requested permission to install a water tank on National Forest System lands. The tank will collect water from Cold Water Spring in an area where hydrants are not readily available. Less than 1 acre of NFS land will be required for this use. The requested use area is accessed via Forest Service Road 1105.

This action will reduce the distance VFD and Forest Service fire fighters have to drive to fill an engine's tank when fires occur in that vicinity enabling them to provide a more rapid response.

**Decision**

After review of the project planning record, I have decided to approve the Lone Rock Volunteer Fire Department's request. I find this action will benefit the community of Lone Rock and the Forest Service by providing a water source for fire suppression efforts in an area where none currently exists.

My decision approves the following actions to be implemented through a written agreement between the Forest Service and the Lone Rock Volunteer Fire Department:

- A concrete split spring collection box will be installed at Cold Water Spring. One outlet will route approximately half of the flow through buried pipe to a 5000 gallon tank; the remaining flow will continue along its existing course to feed an unnamed tributary of Sneeds Creek.
- The system will be plumbed so that during the spring, summer and fall months a valve will completely stop the flow of water to the tank when it is full allowing all of the flow to continue along its traditional path. During the winter, water will be allowed to continuously flow through the tank to prevent freezing. Overflow from the tank will run onto the ground downslope to the creek.
- Access to the storage tank will require construction and maintenance of a small parking area approximately 100 feet off Forest Service Road 1105. Construction of the parking area will require removing vegetation, compacting soil, installing drainage features and laying down gravel.

- Best Management Practices will be implemented for these installations.
- The water tank and parking lot will be located outside the Karst Management Zone for the spring.
- Survey of the area found no heritage properties; however, if any artifacts or human remains are found during implementation of these actions, all work will cease and the appropriate authorities will be notified.

**Categorical Exclusion from Documentation in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement**

I have determined this action falls within the following category listed in regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 220.6 that are excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement:

FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30, § 32.2 (3) (vi): *“Approval, modification or continuation of minor special uses of National Forest System lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land. [36 CFR 220.6(e)(3)]*

In reaching this determination, I considered the potential for effect on the following resource conditions. I found no extraordinary circumstances related to this action that preclude the use of the aforementioned categorical exclusion or warrant preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

- *Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat or Forest Service sensitive species;*
- *Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds;*
- *Congressionally designated areas such as wilderness, wilderness study areas or national recreation areas;*
- *Inventoried Roadless Areas;*
- *Research Natural Areas;*
- *Native American religious or cultural sites, and*
- *Other archaeological sites, historic properties and/or areas*

**Public Involvement**

On July 8, 2014 scoping letters describing the proposal and asking for comment by August 6, 2014 were mailed to Native American tribes associated with Arkansas, individuals that have asked to be notified any actions are proposed, one adjacent landowner, and other state, federal and local government officials.

A scoping letter was also posted on the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests’ website the same week as the letters were mailed. The project was listed on the 4th Quarter Schedule of Proposed Actions for fiscal year 2014.

One supportive response from the public and one response letter of concurrence from a Native American tribe were received. No circumstances related to the implementation of this proposal that would preclude the use of the aforementioned categorical exclusion have been identified.

### **Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations**

All activities have been designed to comply with the requirements of the Ozark-St. Francis National Forests' Land and Resource Management Plan as required by the National Forest Management Act and with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

### **Appeal Opportunities**

This decision is not subject to appeal.

### **Implementation**

This decision may be implemented as soon as a formal agreement between the Lone Rock Volunteer Fire Department and the US Forest Service is completed.

### **Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this decision, please contact me, James R. McCoy, District Ranger or J. Swafford, District Natural Resources Assistant at the Sylamore Ranger District Office 1001 East Main, Mountain View, AR 72560, (870)269-3228.

/s/ *James R. McCoy*

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JAMES R. McCOY  
District Ranger  
Sylamore - St. Francis Ranger District  
Ozark-St. Francis National Forests

August 22, 2014

Date

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