



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Allegheny National Forest
Marienville Ranger District

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File Code: 1950/2300
Date: April 21, 2006

Dear Interested Party:

Enclosed is a copy of my decision for the Clarion River Dispersed Recreation Project. The enclosed Letter to the File, which I signed on April 13, 2006, explains the project and the decision making process.

I read and considered every public comment received on our proposal for this project. I recognize that there is a long history of camping along this stretch of the Clarion River; and, with this decision, I hope to continue to accommodate this use on designated sites on National Forest land. The sheer numbers of people who are parking, swimming, fishing and camping along this section of River Road are having an impact on public safety and environmental quality. Of particular concern is the degradation of the river shoreline and adjacent forested stands resulting from soil compaction and erosion, and the abuse and diminished health of individual trees.

My decision is intended to accomplish three immediate objectives: 1) limit camping along the river to designated sites only; 2) close to camping the remaining sites along the river to allow them to recover from over-use and 3) work with the public to increase awareness of camping techniques that have less impact on the land. We will increase forest patrols along River Road, and monitor activities to determine how well the public adheres to camping restrictions, utilizes lower impact camping techniques, and respects the experience of adjacent users and landowners.

Future decisions about camping along this stretch of the Clarion River will coincide with the new Land and Resource Management Plan for the Allegheny National Forest, and site specific plans for the river corridor. These future decisions can determine the level of services, where and how to accommodate parking, how to rehabilitate degraded sites, or whether to eliminate overnight camping altogether. Any such decisions will be affected by how well individual people who utilize this area limit their own impacts and respect the regulations implemented by this decision that are intended to protect public safety and environmental quality.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to those who submitted comments on this project. Our response to each site specific comment is included with the enclosed Letter to the File. If you have further questions about my decision please contact Nathan Lewis, Natural Resources Specialist (Recreation), at (814) 927-6628, x 163.

Sincerely,

/S/ ROBERT T. FALLON

ROBERT T. FALLON
Acting District Ranger

