

# Forest Service Announces Information And Comment Opportunities On Roadless Proposal

**WASHINGTON, Dec. 1, 1999** -- The USDA Forest Service has initiated a national website for information updates about developing a proposed rule for roadless areas. The web address is <http://roadless.fs.fed.us> and lists a schedule of ongoing national and local scoping meetings for public comment. Additional current information includes answers to questions about the proposal, where to send comments, and background information.

"We hope to give every interested person an opportunity to comment," said Jim Furnish, Forest Service Deputy Chief for the National Forest System. "To do that, we have asked leadership of every National Forest in the country to hold public scoping meetings for local residents--in addition to our 10 national listening sessions."

Six national meetings have been held across the country; four more will be held between now and December 9. The national meetings are structured listening sessions where members of the public can give verbal comments, captured by a court recorder and entered into the public comment record. Local meetings will have a variety of formats, depending on the needs and interests of local residents. Unless a court recorder is provided, comments will be captured through comment cards provided at the meetings.

In addition, individuals may e-mail comments about the proposal to [roadless/wo\\_caet-slc@fs.fed.us](mailto:roadless/wo_caet-slc@fs.fed.us) or send written comments by fax to (801) 517-1021 or USDA Forest Service-CAET, Attention: Roadless Areas NOI, P.O. Box 221090, Salt Lake City, UT 84122. No telephone comments will be taken.

The Forest Service has been working on two proposals --a policy to determine management of its large and underfunded [roads system](#), and a proposed rule for dealing with approximately 50 million acres of inventoried roadless areas on National Forests. President Clinton directed the Forest Service on Oct. 13 to initiate the proposed rulemaking. The Forest Service responded with a Notice of Intent to prepare the proposed rule and draft environmental impact statement in the Federal Register (Vol. 64, No. 201) on Oct. 19, 1999.

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