



NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH • CAROLINA

USDA FOREST SERVICE, 160A ZILICOA STREET, ASHEVILLE, NC 28801

NEWS • RELEASE

Contact: Alice Cohen, 828-257-4258

For Immediate Release

4/23/2009

Forest Service Looks to More Efficient Approach to Managing Archaeological Sites

ASHEVILLE, N.C. – The National Forests in North Carolina is revising the process for reviewing historic and prehistoric archaeological sites on National Forest lands. The Forest is creating a Programmatic Agreement which will provide consistency and efficiency in managing for archaeological preservation while conducting other Forest Service resource management activities such as timber harvesting and trail construction.

There are over 6,000 archaeological sites recorded to date throughout the National Forests in North Carolina. Examples of the range of sites include historic buildings at the Cradle of Forestry in America near Brevard, an historic lookout at Wayah Bald near Franklin, prehistoric Cherokee homesteads, early Euro-American settler sites, historic goldmines, and Civil War sites.

The Agreement builds on years of local heritage program management experience. “We hope this effort will provide for more efficient, consistent and comprehensive consultation as well as promote Forest compliance with the goals and mandates of the Act of 1966”, stated Marisue Hilliard, Forest Supervisor. This effort will encourage more consideration and early planning for historic properties, and better support the Forest’s ability to accomplish its land stewardship and multiple use missions.

The Forest Service heritage program is guided by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which outlines the responsibilities of the Forest to address archaeological sites. All ground disturbing activities on National Forest lands undergo an archeological review, a process which will be streamlined by the Agreement. The process includes determining if archaeological sites are present in a project area, determining their archaeological significance, if the proposed activity will adversely affect the site, and guidelines for working with the State Historic

= = more = =

Preservation Office. The review includes affected or otherwise interested partners such as Federally Recognized Tribes, the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, universities and interested individuals.

An agreement of this type is typically written for a 5-10 year period and may be amended as required during that time. The Agreement development has been led by Joel Hardison, Zone Archaeologist, in conjunction with Rodney Snedeker, Forest Archaeologist and Tribal Liaison. For more information on this process and to get involved, contact Joel Hardison at 910-576-6391 x 104.

###