



File Code: 1950

Date: August 1, 2007

Scoping Report

Outfitter Guide Multi-Year Special Use Permits

August 2007

Dear Planning Participant,

The White Mountain National Forest is conducting an environmental analysis for a Forest-wide administrative action to convert nine Outfitter Guide permits on the White Mountain National Forest from what are currently single year permits to multi-year permits that are in effect for up to ten years. Issuing multi-year Outfitter Guide Permits for up to 10 years to those permittees who meet agency requirements will reduce administrative costs for both the agency and the permittee.

Background

Outfitter Guide Permits (O/G Permits) are a specific type of Special Use Permit which authorize commercial outfitter and guide activities on the White Mountain National Forest. There are typically 170-180 O/G Permits issued each year on the Forest. Most of the permits are annual permits issued to non-profit groups and/or those who use the Forest for less than 50 service days per year. Nine of the current annual permits meet the agency's criteria for conversion to multiyear permits: the permittee must use the Forest for more than 50 service days per year and provide outfitter and guide services to anyone seeking that experience. Issuing multiyear O/G Permits for up to 10 years to those permittees who meet agency requirements would reduce administrative costs for both the agency and the permittee.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to convert the **nine** permits that qualify for conversion to multi-year (up to 10 year) term permits. There would be no change in the number of permits or the type, frequency, or intensity of the authorized uses.

Permittees to be Affected

The proposed action involves nine outfitter guide permittees: Alpine Adventures, The Chewonki Foundation, Eastern Mountain Sports Climbing School, Hurricane Island Outward Bound, Thompson Island Outward Bound, International Mountain Climbing School, Outback Kayak, New England Hiking Holidays, and Northern Extremes. These permittees operate across all three districts of the White Mountain National Forest.

Forest Plan

In order for the Forest Service to consider this action, it must be in compliance with the WMNF Forest Plan. In accordance with the Plan's goals and objectives for Recreation and Special Uses, the proposed action does not disperse recreation use from high to low use areas, it continues to make available recreation opportunities that the Forest Service alone is not able to offer, and it



keeps management consistent with the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (Forest Plan, pp. 1-10 through 1-15).

Environmental Analysis

No environmental effects have been identified related to the proposed project. The proposed conversion would be an administrative decision and would not change the number of permits or the type, frequency, or intensity of the current authorized uses.

It is anticipated that the proposed action would not result in individual or cumulative significant effects on the environment. The analysis of this project can then be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement (EIS) or an environmental assessment (EA) because it is within a category in the Forest Service Handbook (FSH) and there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal. Specifically, this is within FSH 1909.15-2006-1, Chapter 31.2-15 "Issuance of a new special use authorization for a new term to replace an existing or expired special use authorization when the only changes are administrative, there are no changes to the authorized facilities or increases in the scope or intensity of authorized activities, and the applicant or holder is in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the special use authorization".

After conducting and reviewing the environmental analysis, including public involvement, the Forest Supervisor of the White Mountain National Forest will determine whether additional analysis and documentation is warranted. The Forest Supervisor will also decide whether to implement the proposed action.

Public Involvement

We are seeking your comments to help identify issues or concerns associated with the proposed action. The regulations governing this kind of analysis do not allow appeals of the final decision, so we encourage you to share your comments and concerns now so we can incorporate them into the environmental analysis.

In order for your comments to be considered in the next stage of analysis, **they should be received by August 24th, 2007** and submitted in one of the following ways:

Comments should be addressed to Thomas Wagner, Forest Supervisor, in one of the following ways:

By Mail – Pemigewasset Ranger District, 1171 NH Route 175, Holderness, NH 03245,

ATTN: Outfitter Guide Multi-year Special Use Permit Proposal/Kori Marchowsky

By FAX – (603) 536-5147, ATTN: Outfitter Guide Multi-year Special Use Permit proposal/Kori Marchowsky

By phone – (603) 536-1315 (voice) or 603- 536-3281 (TTY), ask for Kori Marchowsky

By email – kmarchowsky@fs.fed.us

Information about this proposal is also available on our website at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/white/projects/index.html>.

In your comments, please include the following information:

- 1) Your name, address and telephone number.

- 2) The project you are commenting on: Outfitter Guide Multi-year Special Use Permit Proposal
- 3) Project-specific comments about the proposal along with supporting information you believe will help identify issues, develop alternatives, or predict environmental effects of our proposal.

Please direct questions to Kori Marchowsky, Recreation Planner, at the above address or call 603-536-1310. Be aware that your name, address and comments will become part of the public record and may be available for public inspection. If this is a concern, please contact us at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your interest in helping us to manage the Special Uses Program on the White Mountain National Forest.

Sincerely,

/s/ Thomas G. Wagner
THOMAS G. WAGNER
Forest Supervisor

cc: Marianne Leberman
Jennifer Batt