



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Arapaho and Roosevelt
National Forests and
Pawnee National Grassland

2150 Centre Avenue, Building E
Fort Collins, CO 80526-8119
Voice: (970) 295-6600 TDD: (970) 295-6794
Web: www.fs.usda.gov/arp
Fax: (970) 295-6696

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Dear Permit Holder:

The Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest and Pawnee National Grassland (ARP) is initiating an outfitter-guide needs assessment to determine the public and agency need for additional authorized outfitting or guiding activities across the forest and by specific forest sub-sets or compartments. A compartment map (www.fs.usda.gov/goto/arp/outfitterguides) has been developed to help agency permit administrators and the public focus on specific geographic areas of interest and character.

In 2008, the Forest Service released directives to more effectively manage the outfitter-guide program. We are following the 2008 policy which includes completing this needs assessment. We see this as an opportunity to improve management of the outfitter-guide program to better meet the needs of the public while protecting the forest/grassland resources.

The 2008 outfitter-guide policy is specified in the Forest Service Handbook (FSH 2709.11) and states that an outfitter-guide permit may be issued when there is a demonstrated need for the proposed service. Need can be assessed using varied information and criteria such as size and character of the area, market demand for specific services, existing outfitter-guide use, visitor demographics, safety and risk concerns, economic benefit, user experience (or lack thereof), user cost to become established in a specific activity or sensitivity of the area. The outcome of a needs assessment is generally an identification or recommendation of certain commercial recreation outfitter-guide opportunities that exist in specific geographic areas.

The ARP is currently in the process of drafting a needs assessment that will consist of:

- Identifying existing outfitter-guide use (location and amount).
- Identifying locations where outfitter-guides are not appropriate due to existing conditions, legislation, Forest Plan direction, or other regulations.
- Gathering input from outfitter-guides, outdoor retailers, recreationists, interested public and agency personnel about the public and agency need for additional commercial recreation activities by geographic area.
- Evaluating existing and potential new outfitter-guide activities based on objectives and developed criteria.



The ARP often receives requests for new outfitter-guide permits and is interested in developing this standardized way of evaluating public need for existing and new guided opportunities. The primary focus is to assess if there are additional needs for commercial guided services on the ARP. However, we are also interested in public feedback regarding the scope of the existing program. We anticipate the majority of authorized use to be maintained at existing levels and will ultimately rely on the results of the assessment to determine what changes might occur in any given management area. We'll be looking at how to manage use by activity, location, timing and season to provide quality recreation opportunities for all.

For more information and to submit feedback on the need for outfitter-guide activities on the ARP, please visit the forest website at www.fs.usda.gov/goto/arp/outfitterguides . You may also contact Paul E. Cruz, O/G Project Coordinator, at (970) 295-6614.

Sincerely,

/s/ Ron J. Archuleta
GLENN P. CASAMASSA
Forest Supervisor

cc: Paul E Cruz