



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Red Rock
Ranger District

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Dear Interested Party:

It's time to once again provide an update on the Recreation Special Uses Program on the Red Rock Ranger District. We were very busy in 2011, and we have some important items to report.

Motorized Use NEPA

First and most important, we completed our year-long study of use levels on Broken Arrow, Schnebly Hill, Soliders Pass, and Vultee Arch (Dry Creek) Roads. We performed this study to address concerns about use levels and capacity on these roads. The results – which can be found in the attached Encounter Level Monitoring Report – indicated that a different management solution was warranted for each road. These approaches and timelines are:

Broken Arrow: Cap use at existing levels, using a Categorical Exclusion and Decision Memo, 2012.

Schnebly Hill: Work with affected permittees to develop a solution to capacity overages, 2012.

Soldiers Pass: Initiate an Environmental Assessment to reduce use, 2012-2013.

Vultee Arch: Hold use at existing levels while working internally to resolve road maintenance and erosion issues.

Each of these will be its own process, separate from the others.

Recreation Event Policy

Recreation and tourism are vital components to the local economy. We have held off on approving new event proposals until we were able to develop a framework for managing large events and to analyze appropriate locations (sites and trails). We have drafted a policy but need to determine sites where this type of use can be safely accommodated. We plan to do this in our Fiscal Year 2013.

Road Maintenance

Using funds from an OHV grant, we were able to complete several miles of work needed to address watershed and erosion issues on four heavily used roads. This was the first in a five-year plan to address these issues on roads receiving heavy outfitter/guide use. This year we plan to address FR152A (Greasy Spoon), and we are also submitting a proposal for another OHV grant, to fund work in 2013.

Outfitter/Guide Training

We provided informational training to our permitted outfitter/guides in January. Over 120



participants attended three, four-hour sessions filled with presentations on local flora, fauna, and geology. We hope to continue providing these sessions in the future.

Short Stop Program (Tour Buses)

We have developed a plan to get tour buses under permit for sites such as Bell Rock Pathway. As soon as we have approval from the Forest Leadership Team, we will hire the necessary personnel and bring this program online.

Future Planning

Now that we have been steadily moving forward with the recreation special uses program for nearly two years, we have a greater understanding of the time required for each of our various projects. We have also worked with our interdisciplinary team to meld this program's needs into the districtwide workload. Our latest project timeline is attached. While our list of long-range projects has not changed, the timing of each one does get adjusted periodically. We understand that it may be frustrating to see a particular project get repeatedly bumped further into the future, but rest assured that we are committed to meeting the public's needs for outfitter/guide services and recreation events. We are making great progress and will continue to do so.

Any time you have questions about the recreation special use program, you may contact Julie Rowe, Recreation Special Uses Staff Officer, at 928-203-2915 or jrowe@fs.fed.us. Don't forget that you can also keep abreast of program developments by viewing our website: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/outfitter-guide>.

Sincerely,



HEATHER C. PROVENCIO
District Ranger

cc: Jeffrey L Gilmore, Charlotte Minor, Karen A Oleary, Paul Flanagan