



Decision Notice

Loveland Dry Gulch Guided Snowcat Tours

Environmental Assessment

USDA Forest Service

Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland

Clear Creek County, Colorado

Decision

Based upon my review of the environmental assessment (EA) and associated project record, I have decided to authorize the proposed action. As described in the EA, the proposed action will establish three seasonal (over-snow) snowcat routes to allow access to drop-off and pick-up points for customers skiing on guided tours. The project is located within the Forest Plan Management Area 8.22: Existing and Potential Ski-Based Resort. This action will require an outfitter guide special use permit on approximately 210 acres outside for Loveland Ski Area's current special use permit boundary.

Further description of the proposed action, as well as a map related to this project, can be found in the EA. This action will move recreational activities in the project area toward objectives, goals, standards, and desired future conditions described in the *Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland's Forest Plan, 1997 Revision (Forest Plan)*.

All design features listed in the EA are an integral part of the proposed action.

Decision Rationale

I have reviewed the environmental analysis and project record for the *Loveland Dry Gulch Guided Snowcat Tours*. I have determined that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment, as disclosed in the Finding of No Significant Impact of the EA. Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required.

My decision to implement the proposed action is consistent with the purpose of and need for the project. The project will provide additional recreational opportunities on National Forest System land, as well as help meet current and future demand at Loveland Ski Area. My decision is consistent with the *Forest Plan* and Loveland Ski Area's 2017 Master Development Plan.

The proposed action reflects changes made in response to issues, concerns, and new information that were considered during the planning process.

Public Involvement

The proposal was listed on the Forest Service Schedule of Proposed Actions since July 1, 2018. A legal notice for a 30-day comment period for the EA was published in the local newspaper of record, *The Coloradoan*, on July 11, 2018. Local, state, and federal agencies, six tribes, and other interested parties were notified of the opportunity to comment on the project, eliciting 67 comment letters.

Findings Required by Other Laws and Regulations

After careful review of the analysis in the EA and specialist reports in the project record, I have determined that the proposed action complies with all applicable laws and regulations including, but not limited to Executive Order 11990, the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Forest



Management Act, and the Endangered Species Act. Furthermore, the proposed action aligns with travel management regulations 36 CFR 212.51, which allows motor vehicle use that is specifically authorized under a written authorization when issued under Federal law or regulations. This decision is consistent with the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland's Forest Plan.

Administrative Review and Objection Opportunities

On February 7, 2020, a legal notice was published in the newspaper of record, *The Coloradoan*, initiating a 45-day opportunity to object. This project implements an existing land management plan and is subject to objection pursuant to 36 CFR 218, "Project-Level Predecisional Administrative Review Process."

Objections, including attachments, must be submitted in writing and filed (regular mail, fax, e-mail, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service) with the reviewing officer (§218.8) within 45 days of the date of publication of the legal notice announcing the opportunity to object in *The Coloradoan*. The publication date of the legal notice in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection (§218.6(c)). Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. It is the objector's responsibility to ensure timely filing (§218.9). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities to comment (§218.8(c)). Only those who submitted timely, specific written comments during the formal comment period may file an objection (§218.5(a)).

Objections must meet content requirements of §218.8(d), including objector's name and address, signature or verification of authorship, identification of the project, and a description of those aspects of the project addressed by the objection, including specific issues, suggested remedies, and supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider. Any decision on this project will not be appealable under §215.11 or any other authority. The objection shall be sent to:

USDA Forest Service, Region 2
Rocky Mountain Region
Attn.: Objection Reviewing Officer
1617 Cole Blvd, Building 17

Lakewood, CO 80401-3305

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., excluding holidays

Fax: 303-275-5134

Email: SM.FS.r02admin-rev@usda.gov

(Acceptable formats for electronic objections are rtf, pdf, doc, or docx)

Please include "*Loveland Dry Gulch Guided Snowcat Tours*" as the subject matter in the correspondence heading.

Implementation Date

If no objection is received, implementation of the decision may begin on, but not before, the fifth business day following the close of the objection filing period (§218.12(c)(2)). If an objection is received, implementation may occur immediately following the close of the objection resolution period (§218.12(a)).



How to Find Project Information

Project information is available on the Forest Service website at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54196>.

For additional information concerning this decision, contact: Bryan West, 303-275-5276, bryanwest@fs.fed.us.

Monte Williams
Forest Supervisor

Date

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