

Scoping Statement
Proposed Pronghorn Migration Corridor
Bridger-Teton National Forest
Wyoming

Bridger-Teton National Forest Supervisor, Kniffy Hamilton, is proposing to designate a pronghorn migration corridor within the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The corridor would extend from the Forest boundary near the Green River Lakes Road north of Pinedale in Sublette County, up the Green River drainage, across Bacon Ridge, and down the Gros Ventre River drainage to the Forest's boundary with Grand Teton National Park just northeast of Kelly in Teton County. The proposed corridor includes portions of the Pinedale and the Jackson Ranger Districts. A map of the corridor is attached; a more detailed map is located at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/btnf/projects/>.

Background/Purpose

The pronghorn that summer in Jackson Hole migrate annually from wintering areas in the Green River basin. Documented round trip migration distances from 175 to 330 miles make this the longest known terrestrial animal migration in the 48 contiguous states. Typically, the pronghorn migrate through the proposed corridor in April or May and again in October or November. These pronghorn are a part of the impressive landscape of free-ranging native Rocky Mountain mammals in northwest Wyoming. This landscape draws tourists from around the world and supports a robust regional economy. A significant portion of the full migration route is within the Bridger-Teton National Forest. Designating this corridor and managing it to facilitate continued successful movement will help ensure protection of this herd and its migration.

Proposal

The Forest Service proposes to designate a Pronghorn Migration Corridor as shown on the attached map and to manage that corridor to facilitate continued successful migration. To that management end, projects and activities in the corridor would be designed and/or timed to allow continued movement through the corridor. Infrastructure such as fences would be designed or located to allow continued movement through the corridor. Presently, activities within the Forest corridor are not compromising the annual migrations, so changes to current activities are not anticipated.

It is important to note that while the full length of the migration route includes lands under various jurisdictions including Bureau of Land Management lands and private lands in Teton and Sublette Counties, this Forest Service proposal applies only to Forest Service System lands within that larger corridor. The proposal does not constrain activities on private property within the Forest boundary.

The designation of the corridor, including the general management direction described above, would be implemented through an amendment to the 1990 Bridger-Teton National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). This proposal is consistent with the goals, objectives, and other direction in the Forest Plan. The amendment will be

processed according to the Forest Planning regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations, specifically 36 CFR 217.

Because the proposal would not result in significant changes to multiple-use goals and objectives for long-term land and resource management, the proposed amendment is considered to be “non-significant” according to the planning regulations, and therefore, can be authorized in a Decision Notice after completion of an Environmental Assessment (EA). If you have any questions about the proposal, please contact John Kuzloski at 307-739-5568. An electronic version of the attached corridor map is available online at www.fs.fed.us/r4/btnf/ along with a larger map containing more detail.

Commenting on the Proposal

If you would like to comment on this proposal, please provide written comments by March 31, 2008 to Kniffy Hamilton, Bridger-Teton National Forest, P.O. Box 1888, Jackson, WY 83001. Electronic comments can be sent to: comments-intermtn-bridger-teton@fs.fed.us; please indicate “pronghorn corridor” in the subject line. Comments will also be accepted by telephone (307-739-5568) or in person at the Forest Supervisor’s Office in Jackson and at the Jackson and Pinedale Ranger District offices. The final decision on this proposal will be subject to administrative appeal pursuant to the regulations at 36 CFR 217.

Note: Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered. Pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency’s decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within 15 days.