



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Forest
Service**

**Bradshaw Ranger District
344 South Cortez
Prescott, AZ 86303**

**Phone: (928) 443-8000
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File Code:1950

Date: November 30, 2007

Dear Interested Party:

Your input is being sought on the proposed Prescott Circle Trail Project on the Bradshaw Ranger District of the Prescott National Forest. This letter and the attached maps will provide you with information on the Purpose and Need and the Proposed Action for the project, the decision to be made, and a request for your comments.

Background:

The Idea for the Prescott Circle Trail was first conceived by the newly formed Yavapai Trails Association (YTA) in 1991. Members of YTA outlined a 45 mile non-motorized trail to circle the City of Prescott, mostly within the Prescott National Forest and the City of Prescott, but also through State Trust Land and Embry Riddle University. In 1993 the YTA received a Heritage Fund Grant to obtain land for the Turley Trail. This first segment of the Circle Trail was completed in 1996. In 1998 the Prescott National Forest initiated the Prescott Basin Project – Phase II which included new trails and converted existing roads as part of the Circle Trail system. The City of Prescott is currently working with State Land Trust as well as private land owners for the final pieces of the trail within city limits.

Purpose/Need for the Action:

Several sections of the current trail are on multi-use trails (that allow motorized vehicles) and forest roads. There are also gaps where no trail exists. This Project will convert roads and a multi-use trail to non-motorized trails; create a new non-motorized trail that will bypass a multi-use trail and include new trails where none exist completing the Circle Trail within the Prescott National Forest.

In order to allow people on foot, horse or bike to travel the whole trail in one trip over several days, four dispersed primitive camping sites, that will accommodate 8-10 people and include a fire ring and hitching post, will be located along the trail.

Past decisions along the Prescott Circle Trail left some roads with no access or roads that dead-ended into non-motorized areas. This Project will close two road segments and convert one to a non-motorized trail.

Proposed Action:

Key:

NT – New Trail	OR – Obliterate Road	CRT – Convert Road to Trail
RT – Re-route Trail	DC – Dispersed Campsite	TH - Trailhead
CT – Convert Trail	CR – Close Road	

Prescott Circle Trail and Connected Actions:

New Trails and Re-Routes

1. Build a new non-motorized trail approximately 0.2 miles in length (with a hand crew) from Trail 341 to the Prescott National Forest boundary. (NT-1)
2. Build a new non-motorized trail approximately 1 mile in length (with hand crew and/or mechanical equipment) beginning about a quarter mile from the junction of Forest Road

9707V and Jack Pine Road to White Spar road (Highway 89) directly across from the entrance to White Spar Campground (Schoolhouse Gulch Road). (NT-2)

3. Build a new non-motorized trail approximately 4 miles in length (with hand crew and/or mechanical equipment) from the Trail 299/396 Trailhead/Parking area at Senator Highway to the south end of Trail 62 by-passing motorized trails 9854 and 299. (NT-3)
4. Re-route the first ½ mile of Trail 48 (with a hand crew) from Copper Basin Rd to establish a more sustainable grade. (RT-1)

Converted Roads and Multi-use Trails

5. Convert Forest Road 9401L from the junction of Trail 48 (closest to Copper Basin Rd) to Trail 9415 to a non-motorized trail. (CRT-1).
6. Convert Forest Road 9707V from Quartz Mountain/Trail 9415 to Jack Pine Road to a non-motorized trail. (CRT-2)
7. Convert Forest Road 9403S to a non-motorized trail. (CRT-3)
8. Convert Trail 9415 to a non-motorized trail. (CT-1)

Dispersed Campsites

9. Add a dispersed campsite at the junction of Trail 346 and Trail 332 (DC-1)
10. Add a dispersed campsite south of Thumb Butte Rd along Trail 392. (DC-2)
11. Add a dispersed campsite at the junction of Trail 9415 and Forest Road 9707V. (DC-3)
12. Add a dispersed campsite along Trail 126 west of Trail 62. (DC-4)

Connected Actions

13. Construct a new trailhead at the junction of Forest Road 51 and Trails 326/327. Trailhead to include parking for 5-10 vehicles and allow for future toilets (TH-1)
14. Close sections of Forest Roads 373A (CR-1) and 51 (CR-2).
15. Obliterate, using mechanical equipment, Forest Road 9401L between Copper Basin Rd and the junction of Trail 48. (OR-1)
16. Install a gate on Jack Pine Road at White Spar Road (Highway 89) to allow emergency access to/from the Cathedral Pines neighborhood.

Request for Comments and Contact Person.

We would like to know of any issues, concerns and suggestions you may have about this proposal. Comments should be as fully formed and specific as possible to assist us in the analysis. Although comments are welcome at any time, they will be most effective if received by January 11, 2008. Please submit your comments in writing via post or email to:

Prescott Circle Trail Project
Prescott National Forest
344 S. Cortez St.
Prescott, AZ 86303
Attn: Rob Hehlen

comments-southwestern-prescott-bradshaw@fs.fed.us

If you have any questions, or if something is unclear, please contact Rob Hehlen of the Prescott National Forest at 928-443-8230 or email at rhehlen@fs.fed.us. **If you wish to remain on or be added to the mailing list for this project, please respond in writing (via letter or e-mail) to indicate your interest in being on the mailing list.** If you do not indicate an interest in being on the mailing list for this project, you will be removed from the mailing list and will not receive future mailings on this project.

Comments received in response to this scoping letter, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this project and will be available

for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, 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. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, 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 thirty (30) days.

Decision To Be Made:

The Bradshaw District Ranger of the Prescott National Forest will decide whether to implement the proposed action, an alternative to the proposed action or to take no action at this time, and whether further environmental documentation in an environmental impact statement is needed. Based on public comments received from response to this scoping notice and on site-specific analysis, the Forest Service will determine whether significant public issues or concerns exist. The nature of the decision is contingent upon that determination.

Sincerely,

/S/ Laura Jo West

**LAURA JO WEST
BRADSHAW DISTRICT RANGER**

Enclosure: Map

Note: Trail 327 shown on the map is part of a previous decision that has not yet been implemented.

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