



# NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH • CAROLINA

USDA FOREST SERVICE, 160A ZILICOA STREET, ASHEVILLE, NC 28801

## NEWS • RELEASE

Contact: Terry Seyden 828-257-4202  
January 9, 2008

For Immediate Release

### **Forest Service Announces Globe Appeal Decision; Commits to Continued Dialogue**

The U.S. Forest Service has upheld the Globe Forest Management Project decision, and Forest Supervisor Marisue Hilliard has called for continued dialogue among the interested parties.

While affirming Grandfather District Ranger Malone's October 4, 2007 decision, Forest Supervisor Marisue Hilliard stated in a letter to project appellants:

"I am very much aware of the sincere concerns expressed by local governments and other constituents about potential project impacts of the Globe project, particularly the concerns about scenic values in the Blowing Rock area and concerns about old growth. It is my intent to take the following actions prior to and during implementation of the Globe project.

- The Forest will emphasize continued dialogue among the interested parties, including the Blowing Rock community, before and during implementation of this project. The Forest will also encourage a broader collaborative discussion about maintaining scenic values, reducing the risk of wildfire in the urban interface and options for using stewardship contracts to accomplish forest management objectives in the Globe project area.

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- The long term Forest Plan direction for lands around Blowing Rock will be addressed collaboratively during Forest Plan revision, tentatively scheduled for initiation in 2010. Implementation of the Globe project will in no way preclude future allocation changes for this area.
- The Forest will explore the use of stewardship contracts for the Globe project to allow for flexibility in timing of project implementation and accomplishing other forest restoration or fire preparedness objectives.
- The Forest will seek opportunities to implement the project in stages. This will allow us to collaboratively monitor the actual impacts of the project, ensuring that the actual on the ground impacts are the same or less than what was estimated in the environmental assessment. If monitoring during the first phases of project implementation demonstrates that scenic impacts are greater than stated in the EA, then the Forest would consider making changes for the remaining phases of the project. Currently the Forest is not scheduled to begin implementation of the Globe project until 2009 at the earliest.
- Forest botanical specialists will conduct additional surveys in Stand 33-11 to ensure that Forest Plan standards are met.”

Forest Supervisor Hilliard’s most recent decision was in response to an administrative appeal filed by the Southern Environmental Law Center of Asheville, NC representing several environmental groups.

The Globe project, first proposed in 2006, generated considerable public interest. The Forest received over a thousand comments on the proposal and made several changes in the project in response to public concerns. The scaled-down project is comprised of seventeen small partial harvest units averaging 11 acres in size, distributed across the 11,225 acre project area. Additional background information on the Globe Forest Management Project is available on the Forest website at <http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc/nepa/grandfather/globe/globe.htm>