

News Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GMUG Proposed Forest Plan Suspended

DELTA, Colo., May 7, 2007 – Public comment on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest (GMUG) proposed Forest Plan is suspended indefinitely. The GMUG proposed Forest Plan was developed under the 2005 Planning Rule and was released for public review on March 16, 2007. On March 30, Judge Phyllis J. Hamilton of the Northern District of California U.S. District Court ruled that the Forest Service’s adoption of new planning regulations (2005 Planning Rule) violated the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Endangered Species Act (ESA). Until the Agency complies with the court’s order, the Court has enjoined the Forest Service from implementing and utilizing the 2005 Planning Rule.

GMUG Forest Supervisor Charlie Richmond said, “We don’t know for sure where we will head with Forest Plan revision in response to the injunction; however, we are evaluating our options for when and how to proceed.” He went on to note, “whatever approach, we decide to use, the public collaboration and recommendations we have received to date will be integral in our continuing planning activities. Our stakeholders have helped us develop a vision for the Forest for the next 15-20 years, and we need to prepare effective plans to guide and support that vision.”

Some of the options under consideration include: “re-initiating” forest plan revision under the 1982 planning regulations, continuing management under the 1983 Forest Plan and addressing any necessary changes through amendment, waiting for the Agency to make the necessary changes to the 2005 Planning Rule to comply with the Court, and continuing with National Forest Management Act (NFMA) planning activities that are independent of the 2005 Planning Rule (e.g. monitoring, public involvement, scientific analysis, etc).

The work that went into developing the proposed Forest Plan, (e.g. the Comprehensive Evaluation Report (CER) and Comprehensive Assessment) provides information about current conditions, trends, and key findings for the social, economic and ecological components of the Forest.

Planning Staff Officer Carmine Lockwood stated, “Regardless of which option(s) we choose, these planning documents, and all the work by our stakeholders, provide valuable information that will be useful in future strategic planning activities, as well as project-level planning efforts.”

Additional information on the Court’s ruling and Forest Service activities:

[Questions and Answers regarding Injunction of the 2005 Rule](#)

[Planning Rule Court Order \(60 pages, 180 kb\)](#)

[Planning Rule Court Final Order \(2 pages, 20 kb\)](#)

[Letter to the Regional Foresters](#) from Joel D. Holtrop, Deputy Chief for National Forest System

[Planning activities that may continue](#)