

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Monongahela
National
Forest

200 Sycamore Street
Elkins, WV 26241-3962
304-636-1800
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Reply to: 2320

Date: February 8, 1993

Mr. Bob Nore, Project Manager
Department of the Army
Huntsville Division, Corps of Engineers
Dolly Sods OEW Removal, DOD Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 1600
Huntsville, Alabama 35807-4301

Dear Mr. Nore:

We understand that the Corps is currently working on a report that will result in a decision on the alternative to be followed for remediation of the OEW in the Dolly Sods Wilderness of the Monongahela National Forest. District Ranger Nancy Feakes, has been unsuccessfully attempting to speak with you about our questions and concerns, and she and some of my staff have reviewed the "Engineering Report for Extent of OEW Contamination and Evaluation of Remedial Action Alternatives". We don't know yet how soon you anticipate doing the remediation work, but feel the need to share the concerns we have and to make you aware of the laws and regulations that we operate under as land managers of this property.

This letter will outline some of our issues and concerns and list some of the regulations that we must consider. However, this listing is not all-inclusive, and we strongly urge you to meet with us on this project as soon as possible.

During a limited review of the project proposal, we identified the following list of issues and concerns.

T/E/S SPECIES PROTECTION - We know Cheat Mtn. Salamander and VN Flying Squirrels are in the area. We don't know about other species (including plants). These could be affected by any activity. **WE DON'T HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF THE PROJECT AREA TO BE ABLE TO DETERMINE WHERE THOSE SPECIES OCCUR. THIS MAY NEED TO BE CONDUCTED AS A PART OF THE PROJECT!**

CREATION OF SLASH - Issues related to this are visual concerns, fire potential, and a possible change in habitat. What are the plans?

CUTTING METHODS - Will you be using motorized equipment? What will you do to prevent the formation of dangerous staubs? Will you be making pungy sticks?

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HERITAGE RESOURCES PROTECTION - You will probably need an Archaeologist on site throughout the project. **WE DO NOT HAVE A COMPLETE SURVEY OF THE PROJECT AREA AND DO NOT KNOW THE LOCATIONS OF THE RESOURCES THAT MUST BE PROTECTED.**

EFFECTS ON NATURALNESS AND VISUAL QUALITY - This is very important to the Wilderness visitor.

EFFECTS OF ALTERING VEGETATIVE COMMUNITY - This will undoubtedly take many years to revert back to the current community, if it ever will.

WILDERNESS QUALITY AND EFFECTS ON WILDERNESS RESOURCE BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER PROJECT.

PUBLIC SAFETY DURING DETONATIONS - We can't easily control movement of the public within this large land base or assure that they are out of the immediate area surrounding the detonations.

EFFECT OF WILDERNESS CLOSURE ON PUBLIC AND USE OF ADJACENT AREAS - (How do we close it?) Closure would last at least a season. Plan shows 163 crew weeks of work.

EFFECT OF THE PROJECT ON PROPOSED RESEARCH NATURAL AREAS, BOTANICAL AREAS, AND THE NATIONAL NATURAL LANDMARK.

Some of the legal requirements we work under are the Wilderness Act and related FS regs, Endangered Species Act, Antiquities Act of 1906, National Historic Preservation Act 1964 (as amended), Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, NEPA, FLPMA, and the Monongahela National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. We can provide you with copies of those regulations, if you wish. Earlier discussions with other persons indicated that you may not be required to comply with all of these regulations. If you are not, we need you to provide us with documentation of your authority and exemptions.

The following people can assist you relative to the threatened, endangered, and sensitive species requirements:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Attn: Bill Tolin
P.O. Box 1278
Elkins, WV 26241

WV Natural Heritage Program
Attn: Brian McDonald
Operations Center
P.O. Box 67
Elkins, WV 26241

We have a very vocal and active public that is interested in the management of this area. You should send notification of your project proposal to the attached list of people. We would also like to coordinate with you on the location of your public meetings when the time comes.

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Because our requirements as the land managers of the area may have a strong impact on your proposal, giving us a chance to review your project prior to releasing it to the public could reduce the amount of work and headaches that both of us have to go through, and greatly facilitate the project. Because of that, I again urge you to contact us as soon as possible to set up a meeting to discuss this project. We also would like to have two copies of your draft report to review as soon as you have it.

Sincerely,

JIM PAGE
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure

MAILING LIST FOR DOLLY SODS ORDNANCE OEW PROPOSAL

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WV DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
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