

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Monongahela
National
Forest

Potomac Ranger District
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Petersburg, WV 26847
VOICE and TTY 304-257-4488

"CARING FOR THE LAND AND SERVING PEOPLE"

FILE

Reply to: 2320

Date: September 8, 1994

Mr. Roland Belew, Project Manager
Department of the Army
Huntsville Division, Corps of Engineers
Dolly Sods OEW Removal, Ordnance & Technical Programs Division
P.O. Box 1600
Huntsville, Alabama 35807-4301

Dear Mr. Belew:

As we approach the end of FY94 and the start of FY95, I wanted to check with you on the status of your plans to include remediation of the Dolly Sods site in your 1995 program of work. When I talked with you about six months ago (March), you indicated that in FY95 you would be doing additional analysis and investigation, and writing any needed NEPA documents and a plan for remediation of the site.

I realize you told me that you don't plan to start that analysis until January when you get your final budget, but I want to make sure that you are aware that the weather, snow, and ground conditions often make on-the-ground data collection at that time of year unpleasant, at best, and often almost impossible. Again, as in the past, I urge you to come to the forest and join us for an on-the-ground review of the conditions and a meeting to discuss our concerns, the laws and regulations that govern the Wilderness area, and some of the challenges that we perceive to be involved with this project before you start on it. The best time for this meeting would be this fall, especially if it is to include an on-the-ground review of the project area.

On September 27, I will be reviewing parts of the proposed project site with Otis "Buzz" Durham of our Supervisor's Office. You and/or other members of your team are invited to join us in the field that day if you can make it. If you cannot make that field review, but would like to set one up for later in the fall, we would be glad to work with you to do that. We are anxious for this project to be a success.

We would also like to know the status of the Dolly Sods North area, that includes the Blackbird Knob target area and is adjacent to the Wilderness Area. Are there any plans for an investigation and evaluation of the ordnance that remains in that parcel? We are hampered in our management of the area, and have limited our publicity and promotion of opportunities in that area at least until such time as this evaluation is done.

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As you know, your draft plan raised significant concerns among the staff here on the Potomac Ranger District, and also at our Forest Supervisor's Office in Elkins. We believe that good communications between our staff and yours are vital to the smooth implementation of this project. I want to emphasize that the listings of concerns in the letters previously sent to you are not ~~all-inclusive, and to strongly urge you to meet with us~~ on this project as soon as possible. Public participation in development of our plans is very important, and you will find several people with a strong interest in this area who not only want to be informed of what you plan to do, but also want a say in how you plan to do it, and this adds to the time needed for planning.

Please call me or contact Dave McMorran of my staff to set up a meeting or on-the-ground review and also to let us know if you will be able to join us on September 27. _____

Sincerely,



NANCY R. F. FEAKES
District Ranger

cc: SO

US Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington Dist, Attn: Wayne Budrus