

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Monongahela
National
Forest

Potomac Ranger District
HC 59, Box 240
Petersburg, WV 26847
VOICE and TTY 304-257-4488
FAX 304-257-2482

"CARING FOR THE LAND AND SERVING PEOPLE"

Reply to: 2320/6740/7400

Date: June 20, 1996

William G. Graham, Chief, Real Estate Division
Department of the Army
Huntington District, Corps of Engineers
502 Eighth Street
Huntington, WV 25701-2070

Dear Mr. Graham:

This letter documents authorization for the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers and its contractors and subcontractors to conduct an ordnance and explosive waste removal action in the Dolly Sods Wilderness this summer in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Environmental Assessment that was signed on September 15, 1995 by Richard W. Jemiola, Colonel, COE District Engineer and on September 22, 1995 by Otis Durham, Acting for Jim Page, Forest Supervisor of the Monongahela National Forest. This action is authorized pursuant to the Organic Act of June 4, 1897 (30 Stat. 34, 36 as supplemented; 16 U.S.C. 473), the Defense Environmental Restoration Program and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act. The purpose of the ordnance and explosive waste removal action is to minimize a threat to the public and long-term wilderness associated values due to the presence of unexploded ordnance and explosive waste.

It is understood that the Department of the Army (DA) has completed a Feasibility Study of the Dolly Sods Wilderness to determine the extent of ordnance and explosive waste. They have evaluated the costs, benefits, and effects of each of the remedial action alternatives and a No Action Alternative, performed a risk analysis of the various alternatives, and arrived at a reasoned course of action to achieve a desired level of public and environmental safety for the areas. In arriving at the course of action, the DA has involved and informed appropriate state and local agencies and interested citizens; considered the Wilderness management direction; site characteristics; threats to the environment including unique, threatened, and endangered species; threats to public health or welfare; and history of the area.

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The course of action the DA will follow is described in the Dolly Sods Wilderness Ordnance Removal Project Environmental Assessment and the April 2, 1996 Statement of Work for Removal Action for Dolly Sods Wilderness. The action can be summarized as follows:

A. Search of the entire length of all the Forest System trails within the Wilderness to a distance of 20' on each side of the trail tread, where vegetation permits, using handheld ordnance detection devices, such as metal detectors. If metal is indicated, the area will be excavated by hand to a depth of one foot.

B. Search of the entire use area of all inventoried campsites within the Wilderness, using handheld ordnance detection devices, such as metal detectors. If metal is indicated, the area will be excavated by hand to a depth of four feet.

C. Discovered UXO will be destroyed in place by detonation, unless the contractor chooses to move it. If they choose to move it, the FS liaison will provide suggestions on suitable, minimal impact places to detonate it.

In carrying out the remedial action the DA and the Forest Service agree as follows:

A. The Forest Service will:

1. Keep the DA advised of special rules, regulations and environmental conditions to be met in the course of locating and/or disposing of any ordnance and explosive waste.
2. Allow entry of the DA onto the National Forest and within the Dolly Sods Wilderness for this removal action by agreed-upon methods consistent with Wilderness and other regulations.
3. Provide a mailing list of known interested citizens.
4. Direct all correspondence concerning the proposed action and its implementation to the DA, as appropriate.
5. Make existing resource information available to the DA and its assignees for use in this project, as requested.
6. Work with the DA and Huntington District to provide timely input to and review of the planning documents, as needed.
7. Provide a Forest Officer to serve as an on-site Liaison Officer during implementation of the remedial action. The primary contact will be Wilderness Technician Nancy Myers, and the secondary contact will be District Ranger Nancy Feakes. Both can be contacted through this office at 257-4488.
8. Include information about the removal action in routine contacts with the Wilderness users during the active search and removal period and assist in efforts to notify the publics of potential hazards and closed areas immediately prior to and during detonations.
9. Furnish the necessary firefighting response during the remedial action.

