



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

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File Code: 2720

Date: October 8, 2004

Dear Forest Stakeholder:

Chattahoochee National Forest personnel are in the process of considering a request from Gunby Communications, Inc. (hereafter referred to as Gunby) to make changes to their permitted area located within the Currahee Mountain Communications Site on National Forest System (NFS) lands in Stephens County, Georgia (map available upon request). Gunby presently holds a special use permit for the use of a specific area within the communications site on Currahee Mountain, and changes to this area would require an amendment to their permit.

The Gunby request involves replacement of their existing communications tower and enlargement of their existing building. Gunby proposes to replace the existing 100 foot tower with a new 140 foot tower. The new tower would be constructed with seven sections, each of which would be 20 feet in height. As per a Rohn tower diagram supplied by Gunby, the bottom four sections would be tapered (10N base to 7N), and the top three sections would be straight (6NST). Gunby would use the new tower to continue to provide two-way radio and microwave radio communication services, but the larger tower would also be capable of supporting a cellular type carrier.

In addition, Gunby proposes to enlarge their interior building space by constructing a new 12 feet by 18 feet wood-frame building that would be attached to the existing 9 feet by 9 feet concrete block building. Light brown steel siding and brown or green steel roofing would be used to enclose the new and old buildings so as to appear as one L-shaped building.

As a result of the new building addition and the larger base required for the new tower, a slight increase in the existing permitted area for the Gunby site would be required. The existing area permitted to Gunby is 22 feet by 22 feet, and the requested changes would increase the area needed to 26 feet by 30 feet. The additional area required would be within the designated boundaries of the Currahee Mountain Communications Site, and would not infringe on any sites presently occupied by other communications site permittees. The proposed site plan for the Gunby facility is available for review upon request.

I would like to hear from you regarding this proposal before making a decision. The requested actions appear to fall into a category of actions that may be excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment. This determination, however, will not be finalized until after consideration of your comments and concerns. The proposal is a starting point for discussion and analysis and no decisions have been made. Responses from the local community, interested individuals and groups, other government agencies, and Forest Service employees are needed to help determine the extent of analysis so we meet the intent of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Comments received help us to assess the proposal and indicate the type of mitigation and monitoring measures that may be needed.



Responses should contain relevant facts or comments along with supporting reasons that we would then consider in reaching a final decision on this proposal. Comments received, including names, become part of the public record and are available for public review. **To have your comments considered in our decision process, we would appreciate receiving your comments by November 8, 2004.** This will help ensure a complete and thorough analysis of the proposal. Send your written comments to the Chattooga Ranger District at the address provided on the letterhead. You may also comment by phone or fax (see letterhead), by e-mail to bboydstun@fs.fed.us, or in person at our office on Highway 197 North in Clarkesville, Georgia. Please note that you will be sent further correspondence on this proposal *only* if you comment or request further correspondence on the proposed changes to the Gunby permit.

In general, the special use process involves a careful review of each application received to determine how the request would affect NFS lands and the public's use of NFS lands. Special use applications must be consistent with Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and special orders that apply to the national forests. Applications are closely examined to determine whether the proposal is an appropriate use of NFS land and whether it is dependent upon NFS land. Applications must also be consistent with the Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) for the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests (January, 2004), including all objectives and standards for management of the lands where a proposed special use area(s) is located.

This letter is being sent to organizations and individuals who have previously participated or been interested in our project proposals, specific areas, or specific uses of the Forest. This letter assumes that you have some familiarity with the planning process as conducted by the Forest Service in accordance with NEPA. If you are receiving this letter and are unsure of the context or how to participate, please contact us at the Chattooga Ranger District. Management of the National Forest is a public trust and is best conducted with broad participation.

Thank you for your interest and involvement.

Sincerely,

/s/ Michael Gryson

MICHAEL GRYSON
District Ranger