



File Code: 1950

Date: December 07, 2001

## SCOPING STATEMENT

### USDA FOREST SERVICE Shoshone National Forest North Zone/Wapiti Ranger District Park County, Wyoming

#### Dear Interested Party:

The Shoshone National Forest is considering implementing two separate recreation projects in the North Fork of the Shoshone River drainage, Park County. Neither one would result in a net increase in recreation development.

The purpose of this letter is to solicit written comments from all concerned parties. Your comments and suggestions are needed and encouraged. Issues and project alternatives will be determined and environmental consequences analyzed during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process initiated by this scoping letter.

#### Introduction and Proposed Action

The **Purpose and Need** for the projects is:

**Project 1 – Big Game Campground Relocation.** This project involves the relocation of the sixteen 16 developed campsites from the Big Game campground (T52N, R106W, Sec. 21, 22) to the nearby Wapiti campground. The Wapiti campground is currently being redesigned and the additional campsites could be incorporated into the new design. Project implementation would be the summer of 2003.

Use levels at the Big Game campground are currently the lowest of any developed campground on the North Fork Shoshone river corridor. It would be more efficient to combine the two campgrounds and realize cost savings from only one water system and consolidate operation and maintenance costs. Removing the improvement at the Big Game campground would allow the area to be restored to a high quality riparian area.

**Project 2 - Grinnell Trail Link.** This project involves constructing a short trail (1.0 to 1.5 miles). The trail would include reconstructing segments of existing, non-system trail and new construction as needed. The trail would link existing trailhead facilities at the new Pahaska Trailhead near the Three Mile campground with the existing Grinnell Creek trail system. Access would be gained to the West Grinnell Creek Trail #752 and the Grinnell Creek Trail #753, which leads to the Grinnell Meadows and the North Absaroka Wilderness. This proposed trail (T52N,



R109W, Sec. 1 and 2) would be located west and north of the Shoshone Lodge, approximately 50 miles west of Cody. Please see the enclosed map. The new trail would not be located in the wilderness area and no new trailhead would be constructed. The current proposed action involves a ford where the trail would cross Grinnell Creek near the junction of trail #752 and #753 (T52N, R109 W, Section 1). It would be designated for non-motorized use.

Constructing a short trail to connect the Grinnell trails to the existing Pahaska trailhead would be more cost effective than constructing a new trailhead. The current Pahaska trailhead is recently built and is large enough to accommodate the expected increases in use associated with the Grinnell trails. Pahaska trailhead was designed to accommodate overnight stays by trail users with livestock. Connecting the Grinnell trails to this trailhead would provide additional recreation opportunities for recreationists staying there.

This is a redesigned project proposal, based on public input received during scoping last spring and concern about any new recreation developments such as trailheads. At that time, the proposal involved building a new trailhead at Grinnell Creek to provide facilities for trail users.

### **Possible Alternatives For Either Project**

- No Action Alternative – Current management would continue and the project would not be implemented.
- Proposed Action – The project would be authorized as proposed.
- Other Alternatives, as needed based on issues and concerns identified during scoping.

### **Preliminary Issues:**

- Timing of project implementation to minimize conflict with other activities
- Potential adverse or beneficial affect on National Forest System lands, permitted summer homes and commercial operations such as lodges or outfitters, and recreationists such trail users or campers
- Potential affect on wildlife or other natural resource values
- Changes in levels of recreation development or recreation use

### **Nature of Decision**

The decision to be made is whether or not to authorize the projects as proposed, or an alternative to the proposal. Also, the decision could include what mitigation measures need to be applied to the proposal. Based on public comment from this scoping notice, the Forest Service must determine whether significant issues or concerns exist. If there are any, they will be addressed in the environmental analysis and the eventual decision.

### **Contacts**

The public is provided this opportunity to identify and submit issues and concerns they feel the Forest Service should address. To be most helpful, written comments need to be submitted no later than January 20, 2002. Comments should be as specific as possible to assist us in the

analysis. Please refer specifically to which project you are commenting on, since two separate projects are included here. For further information about either of these projects, contact project lead Thad Harper, 307-527-6921. Written comments should be sent to: Attention- Marty Sharp, NEPA Coordinator, 203A Yellowstone Ave., Cody, Wyoming 82414 or telephone 307-527-6921. E-mail submissions can be sent to [msharp@fs.fed.us](mailto:msharp@fs.fed.us) and should include your name and address. Again, your comments are important to us.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Brent Larson*

BRENT L. LARSON  
District Ranger

**NOTE:** If you no longer want to be included on the NEPA mailing list to receive these scoping notices, please notify the office and help us keep the mailing list current. Scoping Statements, the quarterly Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) and other related NEPA documents are now being posted on the Internet at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/shoshone>. See "Forest Management" under "Land Management Planning" and then "Project Information" on the Shoshone National Forest home page.