



**File Code:** 1950-1

**Date:** May 20, 2004

Dear Forest Interest:

The Uinta National Forest is initiating scoping for replacement of the boardwalk and associated footings at Cascade Springs Interpretive Site. The project area is located at the east end of the Cascade Springs Road (FSR #70114); about six miles east of the Alpine Loop Road (SR 92) in T.4S., R.3E., Section 24, Salt Lake Base Meridian. The turnoff for SR 92 is about six miles from the mouth of Provo Canyon (see enclosed maps).

The concrete footings for the Cascade Springs Interpretive Site boardwalk were installed in the early 1960s. They are beginning to show signs of deterioration, and the primary purpose for this project is to replace them. In order to access the footings for replacement, the boardwalk would need to be removed. Once the footings are replaced, a new boardwalk would be installed.

A more detailed description of the purpose and need for this project and the specific actions being proposed follows. Your input will help direct and define issues, alternatives considered, and the analysis of environmental effects associated with this proposal. To be most helpful, comments should identify specific issues and concerns with the proposed action. Valid issues and concerns are not factored or weighted by numbers of people or organizations submitting them. This process and decision is not based on popular vote, but by the soundness of the analysis and the information that it incorporates. However, all comments will be addressed.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

Forest Service officials are initiating environmental analysis for replacement of the footings and boardwalk for the Cascade Springs Interpretive Site. The Interpretive Site is located at the east end of the Cascade Springs Road (Forest Service Road #70114), about six miles east of the Alpine Scenic Loop Road (SR 92), in T.4S., R.3E., Section 24, SLB&M. The turnoff for SR 92 is about six miles from the mouth of Provo Canyon. The proposal is to replace the original footings in kind, and reinstall the boardwalk, keeping the entire boardwalk on its original location.

Specific actions associated with this proposal include:

1. Removing the existing boardwalk structure to provide access to the footings for replacement.
2. Replacing all existing concrete and natural stone footings with new 12-inch diameter concrete footings in about the same locations and at a minimum of 8-foot intervals.



3. Casting new concrete footings in place using sonotubes cut to match the existing boardwalk grades and elevations. Minimal, if any, ground disturbance is expected.
4. Installing a new boardwalk structure following installation of the footings.
5. Accessing the work area using the existing trail and boardwalk from the parking lot. Hauling and construction equipment operating on the boardwalk, paths, and bridges would be limited to rubber-tired hand-operated wheel barrows.
6. Mixing the needed concrete at the Cascade Springs Interpretive Site parking lot and transport to the worksite by hand-operated wheel barrow. Mixing equipment would not be allowed adjacent to or near the water course.
7. Completing all drilling, sawing, cutting and sizing of wood materials for reconstruction of the boardwalk at the parking lot as well. No construction material or debris would be allowed to enter the natural water zone.

All activities would be conducted during periods of low water flow to avoid potential impacts to spawning brown trout and (Bonneville) cutthroat trout that are known to be in the Cascade Springs area and in the waters downstream.

## BACKGROUND

Cascade Springs is located in the headwaters for the Provo River above its confluence with the South Fork Deer Creek. The springs at this site are quite extensive and represent a fairly unique habitat in the general sense for this area. The springs cover an area of about 10 acres and flow year-round. The water that flows from this spring contributes about half the volume that runs in the section of the Provo River below Cascade Springs that flows into Deer Creek Reservoir (personal communication with John Hendrix, Recreation Manager, Pleasant Grove Ranger District, Uinta National Forest). The Cascade Springs Interpretive Site and Boardwalk was initially developed in the mid-1960s as a Land and Water Conservation Fund project.

Since its initial development, natural weathering of the concrete footings and wood boardwalk materials has occurred, and the boardwalk is showing wear and tear from years of foot traffic. The structural integrity of the footings has reached a point where they should be replaced because some of them are exhibiting excessive spalling (flaking of exterior surface of the concrete). Replacement of the footings could be achieved on a case-by-case basis as the footings reach a point that they are no longer structurally sound. However, this piecemeal effort at maintaining the facility would not be cost effective. New materials would be used to rebuild the boardwalk structure following replacement of the footings.

## THE IMPACTS BEING ADDRESSED

Initiating this project would address the deferred maintenance need for this particular facility. Without replacement, the footings would likely last another 5-10 years before their condition

*required* replacement. Some footing structures need replacement at this time. The boardwalk structure is holding up, but annual maintenance suggests that it's time to replace the entire boardwalk surface.

Additionally, because the structural integrity of the footings continues to be compromised as time goes on, there is a risk of structural failure of any one of a number of footings, which could result in partial collapse of the boardwalk and pose a risk to the public. Again, it is most efficient and would address the potential safety hazard to replace all footings and boardwalk at the same time.

## PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

The *Purpose* of the proposed action is to replace boardwalk facilities at the Cascade Springs Interpretive Site. The *Need* for the proposed action is:

1. Address the deferred maintenance needs for this facility
2. Be most cost efficient in replacement of both the footings and boardwalk structure.
3. Address the safety hazard associated with continued deterioration of the concrete footings that support the boardwalk.

## PRELIMINARY ISSUES

Issues initially identified during development of the proposed action include:

1. Removal and construction activities should be conducted during times of low flow to reduce potential impacts to spawning brown trout (generally from October 15 through May 15) and Bonneville cutthroat trout (early May through August).

*All concrete mixing and cutting of boardwalk materials would be conducted on the Cascade Springs Interpretive Site parking lot. Removal of existing footings and boardwalk would include complete removal of all materials from the water course. Removal of the old footings would not involve ground-disturbing activities because they are all situated at ground level or on existing rock bases. Use of pre-cast concrete footings as replacement footings would also minimize impacts to the water course.*

*The potential for displacing spawning trout from their spawning grounds is fairly high if the amount of human activity within the area is high. Construction activities could result in such displacement of spawning trout. Additionally, any disturbance that adds sediment to the stream while eggs are incubating would pose a mortality threat to the eggs. Disturbance in the area after fry hatch could affect mortality if activities occur before the fry are wholly mobile. To avoid these potential impacts, but respond to actual conditions on the ground, it is possible that water temperatures could be monitored to more precisely determine when spawning might occur, and facilitate meeting the*

*maintenance needs of this facility without being restricted by broad-based timing limitations.*

2. Activities associated with this project should ensure that any sediment that enters the stream does not increase the turbidity downstream.

*It is anticipated that no ground disturbing activities would be associated with replacement of the footings because the new footings would be placed back on natural ground or on existing rock bases.*

*Access to the work area would be via the existing trail and boardwalk from the parking lot. Hauling and construction equipment operating on the boardwalk, paths, and bridges would be limited to rubber tired hand operated wheel barrows.*

*All concrete mixing would be conducted at the Cascade Springs Interpretive Site parking lot and transported to the worksite by hand-operated wheel barrow. Mixing equipment would not be allowed adjacent to or near the water course.*

*All drilling, sawing, cutting and sizing of wood materials for reconstruction of the boardwalk would be conducted on the parking lot as well. No construction material or debris would be allowed to enter the natural water zone.*

#### HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

Send substantive comments relative to this proposal to the Responsible Official for this project, who is Pam Gardner, District Ranger, 390 N 100 E, Pleasant Grove, UT 84062; phone 801-342-5241; or you may hand deliver your comments during normal business hours from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. Email comments may be sent to [comments-intermtn-uinta-pleasantgrove@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-intermtn-uinta-pleasantgrove@fs.fed.us). The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of the legal notice for this project in the *Provo Daily Herald*. Your comments need to be as specific as possible and contain the following:

1. Your name, address, and (if possible) telephone number;
2. Title of the document(s) on which comment is being submitted; and
3. Specific facts or comments along with supporting reasons that the person believes the Responsible Official should consider in reaching a decision.

#### SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF ANALYSIS

- Scoping and public review and comment on the proposed action would begin with publication of a legal notice in the *Provo Daily Herald* and end 30 days later.
- The environmental analysis is tentatively scheduled to be completed and appropriate decisions made in the early summer of 2004. Because of the scope of this project, it will likely be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or

environmental impact statement under Category 5, Repair and maintenance of recreation sites and facilities (FSH 1909.15, Section 31.1(b)(5)).

Thank you for your interest in management of the Uinta National Forest. If you have questions regarding this proposal, please contact Marlene DePietro, District Natural Resources Staff, at the Pleasant Grove Ranger District at the address above, or by phone at 801-342-5244.

Sincerely,

/s/ Pamela J. Gardner  
PAMELA J. GARDNER  
Pleasant Grove District Ranger

Attachment: Project Area Map