



File Code: 1950

Date: June 14, 2004

Dear Interested Party,

The Uinta National Forest is initiating scoping and asking for public comment on two proposed wildlife habitat improvement projects. One is a project to improve habitat for beaver and other aspen-associated wildlife species. The other is a project to improve habitat for greater sage-grouse. Both proposed projects are located within the upper Strawberry River watershed on the Heber Ranger District of the Uinta National Forest.

The beaver habitat improvement project is designed to restore aspen stands threatened by conifer encroachment and declining age-class diversity. The proposed action would reduce conifer encroachment by thinning and girdling subalpine fir trees that are encroaching upon aspen stands. The proposed action would also regenerate new aspen by cutting mature aspen trees in one to four acre patches. Approximately 40 acres total would be treated for this project.

The sage-grouse habitat improvement project is designed to reduce cover for sage-grouse predators around one of the primary breeding sites (leks) for sage-grouse in Strawberry Valley. Research has shown that sage-grouse in Strawberry Valley are vulnerable to predation by red foxes at the breeding sites. The proposed action is to mechanically thin sagebrush cover in an area 4 to 6 acres in size adjacent to the primary sage-grouse breeding site.

Details of each project can be found on the Uinta National Forest's web page at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/uinta/projects/index.shtml>. If you would like a scoping document for either project mailed to you, or if you have questions about the projects, contact Jeff Waters at (435) 654-7227 or <mailto:jwaters@fs.fed.us>.

Sincerely,

/s/ Julie K. King
JULIE K KING
District Ranger

