



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

August 2004



Draft Environmental Assessment

Monks Hollow Motorized Trail

**Diamond Fork Management Area
Spanish Fork Ranger District
Uinta National Forest
Utah County, Utah
T9S, R5E, Sections 9,10,15,16 (SLM)**

For Information Contact:
Duane Resare
44 West 400 North
Spanish Fork, UT 84660
(801) 361-1654

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Table of Contents

Summary 4

I. Introduction 5

 Document Structure5

 Background5

 Purpose and Need for Action6

 Proposed Action6

 Decision Framework7

 Public Involvement7

 Significant Issues7

 Non-significant Issues8

II. Alternatives, including the Proposed Action..... 11

 Alternatives Considered But Not Fully Explored11

 Alternatives Fully Explored11

 Features and Mitigation Common to Each Alternative.....16

 Forest Plan Consistency17

 Comparison of Alternatives18

III. Environmental Consequences 19

 A. Physical Environment Effects21

 B. Biological Resource Effects24

 C. Social Environment Effects36

IV. Consultation and Coordination 41

V. Appendices..... 42

SUMMARY

The Spanish Fork Ranger District of the Uinta National Forest is proposing the construction of a trail which would connect the existing Monks Hollow and Long Hollow all-terrain vehicle (ATV) trails with the existing Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow ATV trails. These trails are open to hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, and motorcycle riding, however ATV riding is the primary use and management objective. The proposed 2.7 mile connector trail would be open to all of the same uses as the existing trails. Approximately 1.2 miles of new trail would be constructed and approximately 1.5 miles of existing unclassified road would be designated as an ATV trail to create the 2.7 mile connector (Map 1).

The project area is located in Township 9 South, Range 5 East, Sections 9, 10, 15, and 16 (Salt Lake Meridian) in the Diamond Fork Management Area of the Spanish Fork Ranger District, Uinta National Forest. The proposed action would expand motorized and non-motorized trail opportunities and move the Diamond Fork Management Area closer to the Desired Future Conditions described in the 2003 Revised Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

In addition to the proposed action, the Forest Service fully evaluated the following alternatives:

Alternative B: Construction of 2.1 miles of trail would connect the existing Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails through Township 9 South, Range 5 East, Sections 16 and 17 (Salt Lake Meridian), as shown on Map 1. This alternative would follow the ridge on the north side of the upper end of the Long Hollow drainage until it reaches the road at Teat Mountain. All 2.1 miles would be new trail construction.

Alternative C: The no-action alternative provides a baseline for comparing the effects of the action alternatives. Current management of the Monks Hollow trail would continue.

The Spanish Fork District Ranger is the responsible official and will be the deciding officer for this proposal. The decision to be made is either to connect the Monks Hollow and Teat Mountain trail systems by implementing one of the action alternatives or to select the no-action alternative. This decision will be based on how well the alternatives meet the purpose and need for the project and the impacts the alternatives will have on the environment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Document Structure

The Spanish Fork Ranger District has prepared this Environmental Assessment in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations. This Environmental Assessment discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action and alternatives. The document is organized into five parts:

- *Introduction*: The section includes information on the history of the project proposal, the purpose of and need for the project, and the agency's proposal for achieving that purpose and need. This section also details how the Forest Service informed the public of the proposal and how the public responded.
- *Comparison of Alternatives, including the Proposed Action*: This section provides a more detailed description of the agency's proposed action as well as alternative methods for achieving the stated purpose. These alternatives were developed based on significant issues raised by the public and other agencies. This discussion also includes possible mitigation measures. Finally, this section provides a summary table of the environmental consequences associated with each alternative.
- *Environmental Consequences*: This section describes the environmental effects of implementing the proposed action and other alternatives. Within each section, the affected environment is described first, followed by the effects of the No Action Alternative that provides a baseline for evaluation and comparison of the other alternatives that follow.
- *Agencies and Persons Consulted*: This section provides a list of preparers and agencies consulted during the development of the environmental assessment.
- *Appendices*: The appendices provide more detailed information to support the analyses presented in the environmental assessment.

Additional documentation, including more detailed analyses of project-area resources, may be found in the project planning record located at the Spanish Fork Ranger District Office at 44 West 400 North, Spanish Fork, UT, 84660.

Background

A Decision Notice was issued in April of 2003 to construct a trail to connect the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails. This decision was subsequently appealed and remanded, and the proposal was not implemented. The Spanish Fork Ranger District has since refined the proposal. The previous proposal consisted of three parts: (1) trail construction to connect the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails, (2) reconstruction of the existing Monks Hollow trail, and (3) closure and rehabilitation of existing user-created trails. The current proposal is limited to trail construction to connect the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails. The Spanish Fork Ranger District has performed additional environmental analysis and is providing the proposed action for additional public comment. In addition, this proposal is now tiered to the 2003 Revised Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).

Purpose and Need for Action

Recreational use of off-highway vehicles (OHVs), particularly all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), has increased dramatically over the past several years. The number of OHVs registered in Utah increased by 147% between 1998 and 2002 (Stukey, 2003). Public lands, including the Uinta National Forest, are experiencing an increase in demand for OHV riding opportunities.

The Diamond Fork Management Area of the Spanish Fork Ranger District contains the Monks Hollow trail which receives a high level of ATV and motorcycle use. The Monks Hollow trailhead was recently upgraded with paved parking, a new restroom and a user information board to manage this use. The Monks Hollow trailhead currently provides access to approximately 10 miles of motorized trail, consisting of the Monks Hollow trail (approximately 3 miles), which connects with the Long Hollow trail (approximately 7 miles). Forest Road 383 (approximately one mile) connects the Long Hollow trail to State Highway 6, and is also open to OHV use.

The Teat Mountain trail is located approximately two miles east of the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails. The Teat Mountain trail currently provides access to approximately 6 miles of motorized trail, consisting of the Teat Mountain trail (approximately 3 miles), and the Knoll Hollow trail (approximately 3 miles). Forest Road 070 (approximately 6 miles) and Forest Road 076 (approximately 2 miles) are connected to the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails and both roads are open to OHV use.

The purpose of this proposal is to explore the feasibility of connecting the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails. The need for this action is to meet public demand for OHV trail opportunities, improve the quality of OHV trail riding experiences in the Diamond Fork Management Area, and move the Diamond Fork Management Area towards the Desired Future Condition described in the 2003 Forest Plan. The Desired Future Condition for recreation in the Diamond Fork Management Area is described on page 5-56 of the Forest Plan:

“ATV trail opportunities include loop trails and additional facilities to tie into adjacent National Forest trail systems that provide similar opportunities. The Monks Hollow ATV trail is completed, and any areas that have been disturbed through construction have been revegetated.” (USDA, 2003).

The purpose and need for the proposal would be accomplished by providing a longer system of interconnecting trails. Connecting the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails would provide OHV riders departing from the Monks Hollow trailhead with approximately 19 miles of interconnecting trails, and 9 miles of roads open to OHVs.

Proposed Action

The Spanish Fork Ranger District is proposing the construction of a trail which would connect the existing Monks Hollow and Long Hollow ATV trails with the existing Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow ATV trails. These trails are open to hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, and motorcycle riding, however ATV riding is the primary use and management objective. The proposed 2.7 mile connector trail would be open to all of the same uses as the existing trails. Approximately 1.2 miles of new trail would be

constructed and approximately 1.5 miles of existing unclassified road would be designated as an ATV trail to create the 2.7 mile connector (Map 1).

New trail construction (1.2 miles) would include removing vegetation from the trail route and creating a tread base with appropriate water dispersal and drainage structures. Disturbed areas would be seeded with native species following construction. Hand crews and/or mechanized trail construction equipment would perform the trail construction. An ATV cattle guard would be installed on the 1.5 miles of existing road that would be designated as ATV trail, and no other vegetation removal or tread construction would occur on this segment. The information board at the Monks Hollow trailhead, the primary access point for the system, would display information about riding the new trail system responsibly.

Connecting the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails would provide OHV riders departing from the Monks Hollow trailhead with approximately 19 miles of trail and 9 miles of road open to OHVs, compared to the existing condition of approximately 10 miles of trail and one mile of road open to OHVs.

Decision Framework

The responsible official will decide to either connect the Monks Hollow and Teat Mountain trail systems by implementing one of the action alternatives or select the no-action alternative. This decision will be based on how well the alternatives meet the purpose and need for the project, the issues raised during scoping, and the impacts the alternatives will have on the environment.

Public Involvement

Public scoping for a proposal to connect the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails began in January of 2000. Pre-decisional Environmental Assessments were provided for public comment in October of 2000, April of 2002, and January of 2003. Initial public scoping for the current proposal included publication of a legal notice in the *Provo Daily Herald* on December 19, 2003 and letters sent to the 10 individuals who commented on the past proposals and to 14 other interested individuals, groups, agencies and tribes. The Spanish Fork Ranger District received 4 responses during this comment period. The interdisciplinary team used these responses to develop a list of issues to address in this document.

Significant Issues

The interdisciplinary team classified issues as either significant or non-significant. Significant issues were identified as those directly or indirectly caused by implementing the proposed action. Non-significant issues were identified as those: 1) outside the scope of the proposed action; 2) already decided by law, regulation, Forest Plan, or other higher level decision; 3) irrelevant to the decision to be made; or 4) conjectural and not supported by scientific or factual evidence. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations require this delineation in Sec. 1501.7, "...identify and eliminate from detailed study the issues which are not significant or which have been covered by prior environmental review (Sec. 1506.3)..."

The interdisciplinary team identified the following as a significant issue:

The project area is located within Inventoried Roadless Area # 418016 and trail construction and the subsequent increased OHV trail use would impact roadless area characteristics.

This issue is the reason behind the development of Alternative B, which proposes construction of a connector trail that would add approximately 22% less motorized trail to the roadless area than Alternative A, the Proposed Action.

Alternative C, the No-Action Alternative, proposes no trail construction in the roadless area. Due to the location of the existing trails, no feasible alternative could be developed which would connect these trails without impacting the roadless area.

Non-significant Issues

The interdisciplinary team analyzed the following issues that were either raised during scoping for this proposal or discussed in previous similar proposals, and determined them to be non-significant. These issues were either addressed during the development of the proposed alternatives and associated mitigation measures or determined to be 1) outside the scope of the proposed action; 2) already decided by law, regulation, Forest Plan, or other higher level decision; 3) irrelevant to the decision to be made; or 4) conjectural and not supported by scientific or factual evidence. Additional analysis is provided in Chapter III, Affected Environment and Effects Analysis.

Issue 1: Resource problems associated with the user-created trails should be addressed before any additional trail development is initiated. This issue is outside the scope of this proposal. The Spanish Fork Ranger District is actively taking steps to reduce and eliminate user-created trails, however the purpose and need for this proposal is to improve OHV trail riding opportunities in the Diamond Fork Management Area.

Issue 2: Creating additional motorized trail would result in increased off-trail riding in newly accessible areas. This issue is conjectural. The information board at the Monks Hollow trailhead would display information about riding the trail system responsibly. Trails would be patrolled by Forest Service personnel and posted with signs indicating routes open to OHV travel.

Issue 3: The project would negatively affect nesting neotropical migratory birds. Trail construction would be avoided during nesting and fledging season to reduce possible disturbance of nesting neotropical migratory birds.

Issue 4: The project would negatively affect Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) wildlife. No Threatened or Endangered wildlife was found during surveys of the project area and no suitable habitat exists in the project area for Threatened or Endangered wildlife. The project area provides potential habitat for two Sensitive species, Spotted and Western big-eared bat, however no individuals or colonies were found in the project area. As a mitigation measure, discovery of TES wildlife during project implementation would cause trail construction activities to halt. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be consulted if a Threatened or Endangered species is involved. A Forest Service biologist would analyze situations involving Sensitive species and determine additional protective measures to be taken. Trail construction would not resume unless measures could be taken to protect the discovered TES species. Additional analysis is presented in Chapter III.

Issue 5: The project would negatively affect Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive (TES) plants. No Threatened, Endangered or Sensitive plants were found during surveys of the project area and no suitable habitat exists in the project area for these species. As a mitigation measure, discovery of TES plants during project implementation would cause trail construction activities to halt. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be consulted if a Threatened or Endangered species is involved. A Forest Service botanist would analyze situations involving Sensitive species and determine additional protective measures to be taken. Trail construction would not resume unless measures could be taken to protect the discovered TES species. Additional analysis is presented in Chapter III.

Issue 6: The proposed construction activities would contribute to the spread of noxious plants. Mitigation measures would include monitoring areas disturbed during trail construction for three years following construction. In addition, the entire trail system would be monitored for noxious weeds during future routine trail maintenance activities. Noxious weeds found during monitoring would be sprayed with herbicide and/or physically removed.

Issue 7: Trail construction and subsequent increased motorized use would impact watershed resources, including a State of Utah 303(d) listed stream. Diamond Fork Creek is no longer listed as a 303(d) stream. It is now listed as a 305(b) stream. Measures to protect watershed resources include choosing a trail location that minimizes the risk of impacting streams, seeding disturbed areas with native plant species following construction, and constructing appropriate water dispersal and drainage structures. Analysis of the proposed alternatives indicates that no impact to watershed resources would occur. This analysis is presented in detail in Chapter III.

Issue 8: The project would negatively affect culturally and historically significant sites. The project area was surveyed for culturally and historically significant sites and none were found. This analysis is presented in Chapter III.

Issue 9: The proposed trail would affect grazing management by creating a path that the cattle would follow between two units of the Diamond Fork Allotment. Fence construction and installation of cattle guards, features of Alternatives A and B, would mitigate impacts to grazing management.

Issue 10: An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should be prepared because the proposed trail would be built within an Inventoried Roadless Area, which would amount to an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources. The preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) will help determine whether or not an EIS is necessary. This EA evaluates the effect of the proposed alternatives on roadless character. Initial analysis indicates that an EA may be appropriate.

Issue 11: The Forest Service has overreached in identifying areas with roads, power transmission corridors, etc. as Inventoried Roadless Areas. Inventoried Roadless Areas were updated and described in the 2003 Forest Plan. This issue is

outside the scope of this proposal, whose purpose is to improve OHV trail riding opportunities in the Diamond Fork Management Area.

Issue 12: The proposed action would not sufficiently meet the stated purpose and need for the project and additional OHV riding opportunities should be proposed. This issue is conjectural. The stated purpose and need for the project is to improve OHV riding opportunities in the Diamond Fork Management Area. The proposed action would connect the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails and provide OHV trail riders departing from the Monks Hollow Trailhead with approximately 28 miles of interconnecting trails and roads open to OHVs. The existing condition is approximately 11 miles.

II. ALTERNATIVES, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

This chapter describes and compares the alternatives considered for the project. It includes a map and description of each action alternative. This section also presents the differences between each alternative and provides a basis for choice among options by the decision maker.

Alternatives Considered But Not Fully Explored _____

The interdisciplinary team considered and eliminated from detailed study the following alternatives:

- **Constructing a non-motorized trail between the Monks Hollow and Teat Mountain trails.** This alternative was not carried forward because it does not meet the purpose and need for the project, to provide additional OHV trail riding opportunities in the Diamond Fork Management Area.
- **Constructing additional motorized trails connected only to the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails, utilizing existing user-created trails where possible.** This alternative was not carried forward because it would not feasibly create an improved OHV trail system without substantial new trail construction, and the existing adjacent trails would not be connected as described in the Forest Plan Desired Future Conditions.
- **Expanding the proposed action to include providing additional motorized trail routes throughout the district by utilizing other existing routes and designating unclassified roads open to OHVs.** This alternative was not carried forward because it is outside the scope of this project, to provide additional OHV trail riding opportunities in the Diamond Fork Management Area.
- **Constructing no additional trail and closing and rehabilitating existing system and user-created trails.** This alternative was not carried forward because it does not meet the purpose and need for the project, to provide additional OHV trail riding opportunities in the Diamond Fork Management Area. Under the no-action alternative no new trail would be constructed and user-created trails would continue to be closed and rehabilitated as part of on-going management.

Alternatives Fully Explored _____

Alternative A

Proposed Action

This alternative proposes the construction of a trail which would connect the existing Monks Hollow and Long Hollow ATV trails with the existing Teat Mountain and Knoll

Hollow ATV trails. These trails are open to hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, and motorcycle riding, however ATV riding is the primary use and management objective. The proposed 2.7 mile connector trail would be open to all of the same uses as the existing trails.

Approximately 1.2 miles of new trail would be constructed and approximately 1.5 miles of existing unclassified road would be designated as an ATV trail to create the 2.7 mile connector (Map 1). The connector trail would be located in Township 9 South, Range 5 East, Sections 9, 10, 15, and 16 (Salt Lake Meridian).

New trail construction (1.2 miles) would include removing vegetation from the trail route and creating a tread base with appropriate water dispersal and drainage structures.

Disturbed areas would be seeded with native species following construction. Hand crews and/or mechanized trail construction equipment would perform the trail construction. An ATV cattle guard and approximately 100 feet of fence would be installed on the 1.5 miles of existing road that would be designated as ATV trail, and no other vegetation removal or tread construction would occur on this segment. The information board at the Monks Hollow trailhead, the primary access point for the system, would display information about riding the new trail system responsibly.

The Features and Mitigation Common to Each Action Alternative section describes mitigation measures that would be incorporated into this alternative.

Connecting the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails would provide OHV riders departing from the Monks Hollow trailhead with approximately 19 miles of trail and 9 miles of road open to OHVs, compared to the existing condition of approximately 10 miles of trail and one mile of road open to OHVs.

This alternative is the proposed action because it would achieve the purpose and need for the project while taking advantage of an existing road in order to minimize the amount of new trail construction.

Alternative B

This alternative would connect the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails by constructing 2.1 miles of new trail, as shown on Map 1. The trail would be located in Township 9 South, Range 5 East, Sections 16 and 17 (Salt Lake Meridian) in the Diamond Fork Management Area of the Spanish Fork Ranger District.

New trail construction (2.1 miles) would include removing vegetation from the trail route and creating a tread base with appropriate water dispersal and drainage structures. Disturbed areas would be seeded with native species following construction. Hand crews and/or mechanized trail construction equipment would perform the trail construction. An ATV cattle guard would be installed and approximately 1500 feet of fence would be built. The information board at the Monks Hollow trailhead, the primary access point for the system, would display information about riding the new trail system responsibly.

The Features and Mitigation Common to Each Action Alternative section describes mitigation measures that would be incorporated into this alternative.

Connecting the Monks Hollow and Long Hollow trails with the Teat Mountain and Knoll Hollow trails would provide OHV riders departing from the Monks Hollow trailhead with approximately 18 miles of trail and 9 miles of road open to OHVs, compared to the existing condition of approximately 10 miles of trail and one mile of road open to OHVs.

This alternative driven by the significant issue stated on page 5. It was fully explored because it would achieve the purpose of the project while creating 0.6 fewer miles of motorized trail in the Inventoried Roadless Area than Alternative A, which proposes a 2.7 mile connector trail.

Alternative C

No-Action

Under the no-action alternative, no trail construction would occur and current management of the Monks Hollow, Long Hollow, Teat Mountain, and Knoll Hollow trails would continue.

Features and Mitigation Common to Each Alternative __

Mitigation measures ease some of the potential impacts the action alternatives may cause. The following features and mitigation measures apply to both of the action alternatives.

Threatened, Endangered or Sensitive (TES) Plants and Animals

- Discovery of TES species during project implementation would cause trail construction activities to halt. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be consulted if a Threatened or Endangered species is involved. A Forest Service biologist or botanist would analyze situations involving Sensitive species and determine additional protective measures to be taken. Trail construction would not resume unless measures could be taken to protect the discovered TES species.

Neotropical migratory birds

- Trail construction would be avoided during nesting and fledging season to reduce possible disturbance of nesting neotropical migratory birds.

Noxious Weeds

- Disturbed areas would be monitored for noxious weeds for three years following construction and thereafter during routine patrolling and maintenance activities.
- Noxious weeds found during monitoring would be sprayed with herbicide and/or physically removed.

Water Quality and Soils

- Proposed trail locations were chosen to avoid potential impacts to streams.
- Areas disturbed during construction would be seeded with native species.
- Constructed trail would include appropriate water dispersal and drainage structures.

Unauthorized Travel

- An information board at the Monks Hollow trailhead would display information on responsible riding.
- The trail system would be posted with signs indicating routes open to ATV travel.
- The trail system would be patrolled periodically by Forest Service personnel.

Public Safety

- To reduce the likelihood of collisions, trail design would include long sight distances.
- Trailhead signs will provide information to inform the public of other types of trail users they may encounter and which trail users have the right-of-way.
- Trailhead signs will provide information to inform the public of possible hazards.

Forest Plan Consistency

The 2003 Forest Plan provides specific management direction in the form of Goals and Objectives, Standards and Guidelines, Management Prescriptions, and Management Area Desired Future Conditions. The proposed action alternatives are consistent with Forest Plan management direction.

The following Forest-wide goals and sub-goals support the proposal:

- FW-Goal-6 Diverse and suitable recreational opportunities are provided responsive to public demand while maintaining ecosystem health and contributing to social and economic sustainability.
- Sub-goal-6-1 An increasing number of users are accommodated within the capability of the resource by maintaining and improving existing developed recreation sites and emphasizing management of dispersed recreation.
- Sub-goal-6-3 Dispersed recreation opportunities are offered in areas close to urban centers, with an emphasis on a full range of trail opportunities. (USDA, 2003)

Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines that apply to this project include:

- Trans-3 Guideline: Motorized trails should not be constructed or single-track motorized trails reconstructed to accommodate all-terrain vehicles with the exception of trails necessary to complete loops and linkages in the all-terrain system.
- Trans-4 Standard: Motorized trail use is not allowed in areas with a Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized or Primitive Recreation Opportunity Spectrum designation.
- Trans-5 Guideline: Trails should be managed for multiple uses except in isolated instances where specific trails may be managed for limited uses if an overriding or unique situation is identified.
- ROS-1 Guideline: Forest resource uses and activities should meet the objectives for the assigned Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classes for each management area. (USDA, 2003)

The project area falls within Forest Plan Management Prescriptions 6.1, Non-forested ecosystems, and 3.3, Aquatic and Terrestrial Habitat. Both of these Management Prescriptions state:

“Additional motorized trails may be constructed.” (USDA, 2003)

The Management Area Desired Future Condition for recreation in the Diamond Fork Management Area states:

“ATV trail opportunities include loop trails and additional facilities to tie into adjacent National Forest trail systems that provide similar opportunities. The

Monks Hollow ATV trail is completed, and any areas that have been disturbed through construction have been revegetated.” (USDA, 2003)

Comparison of Alternatives

The following table provides a comparison of the total miles of OHV trail that would be added to the Inventoried Roadless Area, total miles of new trail construction, and total mile of OHV opportunity from the Monks Hollow trailhead for each of the proposed alternatives.

Table 1. Comparison of Alternatives.

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Total miles of OHV trail added to the Inventoried Roadless Area	2.7*	2.1	0
Total miles of new trail construction	1.2	2.1	0
Total miles of trails and roads available to OHVs from the Monks Hollow trailhead	19	18	10

* 1.5 miles of existing road would be designated as trail and 1.2 miles of new trail would be constructed.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section summarizes the physical, biological, and social environments of the affected project area and the potential changes to those environments resulting from implementation of the alternatives. Potential direct and indirect effects are described first, followed by a discussion of cumulative effects.

A cumulative impact is the incremental impact of a proposed action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future activities in the Diamond Fork area are described below. Not all of these activities would cause cumulative effects when their effects are combined with the effects of this proposal.

Past Projects

Strawberry Valley Project and CUP

Construction on the Strawberry Valley Project was completed in 1922 when the Strawberry Tunnel was put into operation. The tunnel transported irrigation water from the Uintah Basin to the Bonneville Basin via Diamond Fork. The Strawberry tunnel diverted an annual average of 61,500 acre-feet of water from Strawberry Reservoir into Sixth Water and Diamond Fork Creeks resulting in artificially high flows during the summer irrigation season. The high flows caused extensive deterioration of natural stream channels and resulted in severely limited fish production, loss of riparian and wetland habitat, and reduced recreational experiences along Sixth Water and Diamond Fork Creeks.

In 1956, Congress authorized the construction of the Central Utah Project (CUP). The CUP will transport up to an additional 101,900 acre-feet of water from the Bonneville Unit through Diamond Fork. The Syar Tunnel and Sixth Water Aqueduct were constructed to convey both Strawberry Valley Project water and Bonneville Unit water. The Strawberry Tunnel, which is higher in the system, is still be used to convey instream flow deliveries to Sixth Water Creek and will deliver irrigation supplies (up to a maximum of 200 cfs) during emergencies when Syar Tunnel/Sixth Water Aqueduct are inoperable. Strawberry Valley Project and CUP water deliveries through the Syar Tunnel began in 1996.

To mitigate for the anticipated impacts resulting from the additional diversions of CUP water into Diamond Fork, reduce the impacts from Strawberry Valley Project deliveries, and allow more natural flows in Diamond Fork Creek, the Diamond Fork Pipeline was constructed from Monks Hollow to the mouth of Diamond Fork Canyon. The pipeline was constructed primarily in the existing road corridor from the mouth of Diamond Fork Canyon to Monks Hollow and a seven mile 24-foot-wide asphalt-surfaced road has been constructed over the top of the pipeline. The Diamond Fork Pipeline began operation in June 2004.

The Diamond Fork System is presently being completed by constructing a number of water delivery facilities in Diamond Fork. The system will take water from the Syar Tunnel and deliver it to the Diamond Fork Pipeline through a series of tunnels and pipelines. The completed delivery system, along with mandates from CUPCA, will also provide minimum stream flows in Sixth Water and Diamond Fork Creek. The recently

completed components of the Diamond Fork System include the Sixth Water Connection, Tanner Ridge Tunnel, Upper Diamond Fork Pipeline, Upper Diamond Fork Tunnel, Diamond Fork Outlet and connection to the Diamond Fork Pipeline.

Stream Bank Hardenings

Many locations on Diamond Fork Creek have historically had stream bank hardening for flood control, to protect adjacent infrastructure, and for agricultural purposes.

Springville Crossing-Rays Valley Road Reconstruction

A segment of the Rays Valley road was moved from its old location along a riparian zone to an upland site in 2003. The old road was reshaped, resurfaced with gravel, and seeded.

Private Land Acquisition

Lands have been acquired in Diamond Fork to be managed for wildlife habitat and public access for fishing. These lands include the Lower Diamond Fork Mitigation Lands (approximately 168 acres), the Redford Mitigation Lands (approximately 617 acres), and Red Hollow (approximately 640 acres).

Diamond Fork Campground Reconstruction

The Diamond Fork Campground was reconstructed in 1999 with a capacity approximately 33 percent smaller than the original facility. This reduction in capacity resulted from removing group-site facilities from the campground and single family campsites from the active floodplain of Diamond Fork Creek.

Monks Hollow and Three Forks Trailheads

The Monks Hollow trailhead was upgraded in 2003 with a paved parking area and a bathroom, and the trailhead is being used for trailer camping in addition to trail parking. The Three Forks trailhead was reconstructed with a new access road, bathroom, and information kiosk.

Present and Future Projects

Sixth Water and Diamond Fork Creek Restoration

A monitoring program will be developed and implemented to measure the response to flow changes resulting from the operation of the Diamond Fork System. A conceptual aquatic and riparian habitat restoration plan for Diamond Fork from Diamond Fork pipeline outlet to the Spanish Fork River will be developed.

Utah Lake Drainage Basin Water Delivery System (ULS) Powerplants

As part of the ULS two hydroelectric generating plants would be constructed on the Diamond Fork System. The Sixth Water Power Facility would occupy 0.7 acres and consist of a 45 megawatt (MW) generator located at the Sixth Water Aqueduct outlet. The Upper Diamond Fork Power Facility would occupy 0.3 acres and consist of a 5 MW generator located adjacent to the Upper Diamond Fork Flow Control Structure.

Range Management Activities

When the Diamond Fork System becomes fully operational and high flows are removed from Diamond Fork Creek, cattle movement will not be restricted as before. Additional fencing may be required in some locations to keep cattle in the appropriate grazing allotments.

Recreation Facilities

Additional recreation facilities planned for Diamond Fork include the following: a group-sites developed campground along Diamond Fork Creek, fishing access parking and restrooms, a day use area at Red Ledges, education and interpretive sites, and trailhead improvements at Sawmill Hollow and Fifth Water.

Dispersed Camping Management

Two sites in Diamond Fork have been tentatively identified to be hardened for continued dispersed camping use.

Red Bull Wildfire

The ongoing Red Bull Wildfire and associated rehabilitation activities may have cumulative impacts to the project area. These impacts have not yet been analyzed.

A. Physical Environment Effects

Air Quality

Affected Environment

National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) are established by the Environmental Protection Agency to promote a level of air quality sufficient to protect public health. Individual states are responsible for enacting implementation plans for areas that do not meet air quality standards. The project area is located in Utah County which is classified as a non-attainment area for small particulate matter. The effects analysis and cumulative effects analysis area for air quality includes the entire Diamond Fork Watershed and a portion of the Spanish Fork Watershed.

Effects Analysis

Under Alternatives A and B, trail construction activities would temporarily impact air quality in the project area. Trail construction would cause dust to rise in the immediate area, and mechanized trail construction equipment would create exhaust fumes. Increased OHV traffic following completion of trail construction would create dust and exhaust fumes. These effects would be local and of short-duration and the project would not impede attainment of air quality standards.

Cumulative Effects

The following previously described past, present and future projects may, in combination with this project, have a cumulative effect on air quality:

- Sixth Water and Diamond Fork Creek Restoration
- Private land acquisition (increased public access)
- Monks Hollow and Three Forks trailhead improvements
- Diamond Fork group-sites campground construction
- Fishing access parking and restroom construction
- Red Ledges day use area construction
- Education and interpretive sites construction
- Sawmill Hollow and Fifth Water trailhead improvements
- Dispersed campsites hardening

This project and each of these other activities is likely to draw more recreationists to Diamond Fork, resulting in more passenger vehicles and OHVs on the roads and trails.

This increase in vehicles will produce more exhaust pollutants and dust. Dispersed campsite and developed campground occupancy will likely increase, as will the number of campfires producing smoke. The cumulative effect is that air quality along Diamond Fork Creek will likely be affected for short periods of time, particularly during the summer, on weekends and holidays.

Water Quality

Affected Environment

The area where new trail construction would occur under Alternatives A and B follows primarily along a ridge or side slope, with some flatter terrain associated with the Alternative B route. These areas are not currently experiencing any significant soil loss or run off. Both Monks Hollow and Long Hollow are intermittent streams. Monks Hollow drains into Diamond Fork Creek, which, from its confluence with Sixth Water to its confluence with the Spanish Fork River, is a State of Utah 305(b) Listed Water Body.

Effects Analysis

The effects analysis and cumulative effects analysis area for water quality includes the entire Diamond Fork Watershed and a portion of the Spanish Fork Watershed. Alternative A would construct approximately 1.2 miles of new trail and would impact approximately one acre. The trail would have an average weighted slope of 11.8% and would be constructed on hillsides ranging from 8 to 20%. The Forest Service Water Erosion Prediction Project Computer Model (WEPP) was used to compare sediment production and delivery for all alternatives proposed. The model indicated that an unrutted (best case scenario) Alternative A would result in essentially zero sediment reaching the stream. WEPP results indicate that a rutted Alternative A (worst case scenario) would result in 3 to 6 times more sediment leaving the buffer than an unrutted Alternative A. Even with sediment leaving the buffer, the results are very low and, with proper trail design and revegetation of cut and fill slopes, would have no impact on watershed and stream resources. The HYDRAIN model (a flood frequency analysis program developed by the Federal Highway Administration) was used to compare runoff values for all alternatives proposed. Results of this model indicate that there would be no increases in runoff after the construction of Alternative A. Construction of any new trail will produce localized resource effects. Sediment would be produced during the trail construction period (but not delivered to streams) and rill and gully erosion are possible on the cut and fill slopes before revegetation takes place. The rehabilitation of one mile of user-created trail would reduce other localized erosion and sediment introduction into the watershed, as well as allow the riparian area in lower Monks Hollow to recover. The construction of Alternative A would have no negative impacts on Bonneville cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki utah*) habitat.

Alternative B would construct approximately 2.1 miles of new trail and impact about 1.5 acres. The trail would have an average weighted slope of 10.3% and would be constructed on hillsides ranging from 0 to 17.8%. Because this alternative would not utilize the old existing travelway, more new construction would occur, and the short term impacts, such as localized sediment production (but not delivery) and rill and gully erosion, would be greater than in Alternative A. WEPP results indicate that an unrutted Alternative B would produce 1.5 times more trail prism erosion per year than an unrutted

Alternative A and that a rutted Alternative B would increase sediment leaving the buffer 3 to 6 times more than an unrutted Alternative B. It should be noted that the WEPP model is accurate to between plus or minus 50-100%. This means that results obtained from the WEPP model for trail prism erosion are essentially the same for Alternatives A and B. The sediment production and delivery estimates for either alternative are very low and proper trail design and revegetation would eliminate effects to watershed and stream resources. Results of the HYDRAIN model indicate that runoff would not be affected by the construction of Alternative B. The construction of Alternative B would have no negative impacts on Bonneville cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki utah*) habitat.

Under Alternative C, no new construction would occur. The WEPP and HYDRAIN models indicate that natural erosion rates for the currently undisturbed sites where the potential trail would be constructed are essentially zero. Neither site produces upland erosion with the current vegetation type and cover. Short-term localized upland sediment would be produced under Alternatives A and B but not under Alternative C. Existing problems from user created trails would be mitigated as they are closed and rehabilitated.

Cumulative Effects: Soils and Water

Many of the past, present and future projects described earlier have, or would have, significant effects on water quality in the Diamond Fork area. Because this project would have no effect on water quality, there is no cumulative effect.

B. Biological Resource Effects

Terrestrial Wildlife: Endangered, Threatened, and Candidate Species

Affected Environment

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) lists the following federally protected terrestrial wildlife species that could be affected by the proposed project (Federally Listed and Proposed (P) Endangered (E) and Threatened (T)): Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) (T), Western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*) (C), and Canada lynx (*Lynx Canadensis*) (T).

Bald Eagle Bald eagles require habitat that will provide them with open water for feeding and large, mature trees for nesting, roosting, and perching (DeGraaf et. al. 1991). The winter habitat used by eagles includes lakes, streams or rivers for feeding (Saxton 1997). There are only four known breeding occurrences in Utah for bald eagles, none of which occur on the Uinta National Forest (UDNR 1998). Bald eagles use the Diamond Fork Creek riparian area for winter foraging and roosting habitat. There are no known nest sites within the Diamond Fork watershed.

Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo The western yellow-billed cuckoo requires large blocks (greater than 25 acres) of riparian habitat (particularly woodlands with cottonwoods and willows) with dense understory foliage (USDI 2001). Their diet consists mostly of hairy caterpillars but they will also eat cicadas, beetles, grasshoppers, crickets, other insects, berries, frogs and lizards (Stokes 1996). The western yellow-billed cuckoo is rare in Utah. The May 2001 Natural Heritage database shows 18 known locations in Utah. All are at elevations below National Forest systems lands (Williams 2001). No yellow-billed cuckoos have been found in the Diamond Fork watershed. They have been found in close proximity in nearby Thistle Creek, and the Spanish Fork River.

Canada Lynx The Canada lynx requires boreal forest habitat of both typical old growth and an early successional structure, relying heavily on snowshoe hare as prey (USDA 1991). Presence of the Canada lynx has not been documented in Diamond Fork. Areas within the Diamond Fork watershed have been designated winter range based solely on habitat type. There is also a key linkage route along Strawberry Ridge bordering the east side of the watershed.

The Biological Opinion issued by the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for the 2003 Land and Resource Management Plan states that recent records of lynx in Utah include unconfirmed reports from 1980 and 1982 in the Uinta Mountains.

Effects Analysis

Analysis Methods

Data utilized for this analysis includes the *Diamond Fork Area Assessment* (USDA 2000); habitat and population surveys from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources; and Forest Service field surveys. The Diamond Fork watershed has been surveyed for TEP

terrestrial wildlife and its habitat. The areas along Diamond Fork Creek and upper Sixth Water Creek were surveyed for wintering bald eagles by snowmobile during early winter of 2000. Neo-tropical migratory bird species monitoring surveys were conducted along several sites within the watershed during 1994, 1999, 2000, 2002, and 2004.

Effects Common to Alternatives A and B

The proposed project areas were not included in the bald eagle surveys in 2000 as there is no riparian habitat within the proposed project areas. Surveys along the Diamond Fork Creek, adjacent to the Monks Hollow trailhead showed no use of this area by wintering bald eagles, even though there is potential habitat for eagles there.

There will be no direct effects to the bald eagle as a result of trail construction, due to lack of habitat within the project area. There may be indirect effects to the bald eagle from the increased activity within the parking area adjacent to the creek. Loud noise from ATVs and snowmobiles may keep the eagles from using the area as roosting habitat. This would not affect their foraging area, as there are no large, open stretches of creek associated with the Monks Hollow area.

No western yellow-billed cuckoos have been found during neo-tropical migratory bird surveys conducted within the watershed at Billie's Mountain (1994, 2000), Rays Valley (1994, 1999, 2000, and 2004), Two Tom Hill (1994, 2000, and 2004) or along Diamond Fork Creek (1999, 2002, and 2004).

There will be no direct effects to the Western yellow-billed cuckoo as a result of trail construction, due to lack of habitat within the project area. Potential habitat for the cuckoo does exist along the Diamond Fork Creek. There may be indirect effects to the cuckoo from the increased activity within the parking area adjacent to the creek. Loud noise from ATVs and snowmobiles may keep the cuckoos from ever using the area.

There will be no direct or indirect effects to the Canada lynx as a result of trail construction due to lack of boreal habitat and adequate prey base within the project area or watershed. There is no habitat in the project area or watershed for snowshoe hares (dense coniferous stands over 7000 feet elevation), which is the primary food source for the lynx.

Effects of Alternative C

Not building the trail will have no direct impact on the bald eagle, the Western yellow-billed cuckoo, or the Canada lynx for the reasons described above.

The same indirect effects as described above, also apply to all three species. Even if the trail is not built, use of this area will continue to rise as the demand for recreational areas increase with the increasing population of the urban front. Not building the trail will not reduce the pressure for more developed ATV opportunities.

Terrestrial Wildlife: Sensitive Species

Affected Environment

The following are designated Forest Service sensitive terrestrial wildlife species having the potential to be located on the Uinta National Forest (Intermountain Region Proposed, Endangered, Threatened and Sensitive Species December 2003): spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens*), fisher (*Martes pennanti*), greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*), flammulated owl (*Otus flammeolus*), Northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), and Northern three-toed woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*).

Townsend's big-eared bats Townsend's big-eared bats are known to occur throughout Utah, and are a well-known hibernator utilizing caves and mines. Caves or adits are the primary habitat determinants for the species (USDA 1991a). The species utilizes desert shrub, pinion-juniper, pinion-juniper-sagebrush, mountain brush, mixed forest, and ponderosa pine forest for foraging habitat (UDNR 2000a). There is a population of Townsend's big-eared bats in the west Monks Hollow adit approximately 1/2 mile south of the Monks Hollow trailhead. Approximately 40 bats were discovered during a May 1999 survey. Bat gates were installed in the mouths of the adits to protect them from human disturbance.

Spotted bat The spotted bat has been captured in Utah in several habitats including low land riparian, desert shrub communities, sagebrush-rabbit brush, ponderosa pine forest, montane grassland (grass-aspen) and montane forest and woodland (grass-spruce-aspen) (UDNR 2000a). They use rock crevices high up on steep cliff faces. Cracks in limestone and sandstone with 1-2 inches widths are important roosting sites (USDA 1991a). Surveys conducted at abandon mine sites in American Fork Canyon (Pleasant Grove Ranger District) found occurrences of spotted bats in 1997. There are limited rock outcrops within the watershed that may provide potential habitat for this species, but will not be impacted by activities associated with this project. No spotted bats were found during the 1999 survey of the Monks Hollow adits. As there is no potential habitat in the project, or historical occurrence within the watershed, no additional surveys have been conducted.

Fisher Fishers prefer dense lowland forests and spruce-fir stands with extensive canopy cover. They prey upon small to medium mammals, birds, and carrion of large mammal species. In coniferous forests they concentrate on snowshoe hare (Zaveloff 1988). There is no substantial evidence that fisher historically or currently reside in Utah. There is one photographic record of tracks from 1938 in Summit County, but it is considered speculative (UDNR 1998b). There is no habitat for the fisher either within the project area or within the watershed.

Greater sage grouse Greater sage grouse inhabit sagebrush plains, foothills, and mountain valleys. Sagebrush is the predominant plant of quality habitat (UDWR 2003).

On the Uinta National Forest sage grouse are found in the Vernon area of the Spanish Fork Ranger District and in Strawberry Valley on the Heber Ranger District. There is limited greater sage grouse habitat, and no historic occurrence of greater sage grouse within the Diamond Fork watershed. Sagebrush is not the predominant vegetation type in the Diamond Fork watershed, which would explain why the sage grouse are not located here.

Flammulated owl The flammulated owl is an insectivorous species that resides mainly in mixed pine forests. They prefer ponderosa pine but also occur in spruce-fir, Douglas fir, lodge pole pine, aspen and pinion juniper (Williams 1999; DeGraaf et al. 1991). They use previously excavated cavities in large diameter trees for nesting habitat (USDA 1991c). Limited habitat occurs for flammulated owls within the watershed and the project analysis areas. No surveys have been conducted specifically for the flammulated owls. There have been no occurrences of the owls during neo-tropical migratory bird surveys.

Northern goshawk Northern goshawks are found in several locations throughout the Uinta National Forest. The species utilizes a variety of trees for nesting, using sticks as nest material. Goshawks forage in dense woodlands, but prefer a more open understory for flight purposes (USDA 1991a). Northern goshawks are found on Timber Mountain approximately eight miles northwest of the proposed trail just outside the watershed, but not in the proposed project areas for all the alternatives due to a lack of habitat.

Peregrine falcon Peregrines typically occupy open country habitats near water. Cliffs are preferred for nesting habitat and they typically prey on smaller birds (USDA 1991a). Historical nests are known from above Alpine (Pleasant Grove Ranger District) in the early 1970s and in the canyons east of Utah Lake from the 1930s to the 1960s, but no nests have been found on the Uinta National Forest in recent years. There is potential habitat for peregrines within the watershed in the Sixth Water Creek area, but no potential habitat within the proposed project area.

Northern three-toed woodpecker The Northern three-toed woodpecker resides in mixed forest and requires dead trees for cavity nests. They excavate cavities in trees with a 9" dbh or greater located near high insect populations (mainly spruce bark beetles) (USDA 1991c). No nesting habitat is within the proposed project area, although limited, scattered habitat does occur within the Diamond Fork watershed.

Effects Analysis

Analysis Methods

Data utilized for this analysis includes the *Diamond Fork Area Assessment* (USDA 2000); habitat and population surveys from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources; and Forest Service field surveys. The Diamond Fork watershed has been surveyed for sensitive terrestrial wildlife and its habitat. Neo-tropical migratory bird species monitoring surveys were conducted during 1994, 1999, 2000, 2002, and 2004.

Effects Common to Alternatives A and B

The following species are removed from discussion due to their lack of habitat within the project area and the lack of historic occurrence combined with limited habitat: spotted bat, fisher, greater sage-grouse, flammulated owl, Northern three-toed woodpeckers and peregrine falcons.

The proposed trail is within three miles of the Monks Hollow adit where Townsend's big-eared bats are located. There will be no direct impacts from construction. However, there is a potential for increased indirect impacts associated with additional people using

the Monks Hollow trailhead to access the trail. Townsend's big-eared bats are very sensitive to human disturbance.

There will be no direct or indirect effects to the Northern goshawk as a result of trail construction, due to lack of habitat within the project area and limited habitat within the watershed. Noise from ATVs will not be a limiting factor for the goshawks. Goshawks have been known to nest successfully in areas adjacent to on-going logging activities (Field reports on file in the Spanish Fork office).

Alternative C

There will be direct impacts to habitat within the project area through the construction of user created trails. Even if the trail is not built, use of this area will continue to rise as the demand for recreational areas increase with the increasing population of the urban front. Not building the trail will not reduce the pressure for more developed ATV opportunities. There will be potential for increased loss of habitat from existing uncontrolled ATV recreational activities between the existing Monks Hollow and Teat Mountain trails.

Terrestrial Wildlife: Management Indicator Species

Affected Environment

Management Indicator Species (MIS) are listed in Appendix B of the Uinta National Forest 2003 Land and Resource Management Plan. Species selected as MIS are used to monitor a particular habitat type. This is accomplished by assessing the habitat conditions and population changes of the species that occupy each habitat as required in 36 CFR 219.19. Terrestrial MIS species include: beaver, Northern goshawk, and three-toed woodpecker.

Beaver The Diamond Fork Area Assessment (2000) describes the Diamond Fork area as having a large beaver population in many areas of wide willow complexes during pre-settlement conditions. Over time, the beaver populations declined due to overgrazing of willows, road building in the bottoms of drainages, and trapping. They reached a low point in the 1940's, and were only found in the headwaters of Diamond Fork and Fifth Water. Today beaver are found in a majority of creeks within the Diamond Fork Watershed.

Riparian habitats are not found within the proposed project area, but are found throughout the Diamond Fork watershed. Diamond Fork Creek, Sixth Water Creek, an Unnamed Tributary to Diamond Fork and Wanrhodes Creek were surveyed in April 2002 for the presence of beaver and beaver dams. No beaver were noted within the Diamond Fork Creek adjacent to the Monks Hollow trailhead during the survey. Diamond Fork Creek had seventeen potentially active beaver dams within three and a half miles downstream of Springville Crossing, and five potentially active beaver dams within one-half mile upstream of Springville Crossing. No potentially active or abandoned beaver dams were found in the Unnamed Tributary. One potentially active beaver dam was found on Sixth Water Creek three-quarters to a mile upstream of the Rays Valley Road Bridge and Sixth

Water Creek crossing. Over fifty (50) dams were counted on Wanrhodes Creek in the two and a half (2 ½) miles from where the Wanrhodes road meets with Diamond Fork Road.

No beaver dams were found in the Diamond Fork Creek between Three Forks and Highway 6. This is probably a result of the high flows or irrigation water that had been released into Sixth Water Creek from the Syar Tunnel. These high flows (up to 500 cfs at highest flow) wash out the beaver dams. Now that the Central Utah Project is completed and the irrigation waters are removed from the system, it is probable that the beaver will expand their territories to the rest of Diamond Fork Creek.

The data described above is indicative of beaver populations and trends throughout the rest of the Diamond Fork drainage. Beaver reached a low point in the 1940's and were only found in the headwaters of Diamond Fork and Fifth Water. Now we are finding beavers in most of the tributaries to Diamond Fork as well as in lower reaches of the Diamond Fork Creek. While this may not show a population increase, it does show an expansion of the range since the 1940's. If beaver are expanding their range, it is safe to assume that the population has increased with the expansion. Once the flows in Diamond Fork Creek stabilize, there will be more opportunities for beaver to relocate in the lower reaches of the stream. Without the high annual flows, beaver will be able to colonize areas and build dams in areas that were currently washed out in the high flows.

Northern goshawk Northern goshawks are found on Timber Mountain approximately five miles northwest of the Monks Hollow trailhead, but not in the proposed project areas for any of the alternatives due to a lack of habitat.

The Forest has been monitoring goshawk population trend since 1996 by monitoring territory occupancy (USDA 1996-2004) Between 13 and 19 territories were monitored annually across the Uinta National Forest. Territory occupancy ranged from 8 to 37 percent during those years, with no strong negative or positive trend over time.

Northern three-toed woodpecker The Northern three-toed woodpecker resides in mixed forest and requires dead trees for cavity nests. No nesting habitat is within the proposed project areas for all of the alternatives, although limited, scattered habitat does occur in the Diamond Fork watershed.

Eleven surveys specific for three-toed woodpeckers were conducted Forest wide in 2003. Only one of the areas surveyed (on the Heber Ranger District) contained three-toed woodpeckers. Forest surveys prior to the 2003 surveys are discussed in the Biological Evaluation.

Although the presence of birds has been established on the Forest, no nest sites have been found. The numbers of birds found during these surveys were low in number (1-4), but they were consistently found over the years within the studied areas. This suggests that the numbers of birds are stable within the surveyed areas.

Effects Analysis

Analysis Methods

Data utilized for this analysis includes the *Diamond Fork Area Assessment* (USDA 2000). The Diamond Fork watershed has been surveyed for MIS and their habitat. Neotropical migratory bird species monitoring surveys were conducted during 1995 and 2004. Beaver surveys were conducted in the spring of 2002.

There will be no direct or indirect effects to beaver due to their association with riparian habitat and known locations within the Diamond Fork watershed. They will not be affected by increased traffic in the Monks Hollow parking lot area as the banks of the creek in this area are too steep to provide good beaver habitat.

See discussion above for Northern three-toed woodpeckers and Northern goshawks.

Neotropical Migratory Birds

Affected Environment

The area has a diverse neotropical migratory bird population that uses the area for breeding and nesting grounds.

Effects Analysis

The construction of new trail may affect neotropical migratory bird foraging and nesting habitat through vegetative disturbance, dissection of contiguous habitat, and increased human and noise disturbance. Construction activities would occur after July 30th to reduce the risk of disturbing the nesting and fledging periods of any neotropical migrants that may be in the area.

Alternative A would directly disturb approximately one acre of mostly open meadows and mountain brush patches (potential foraging and nesting habitat for neotropical birds) as part of the new trail construction. There would also be some indirect impacts from introducing a trail into an area that has previously not had a trail. Human and noise disturbance would increase due to easier access into the area.

Alternative B would directly disturb approximately 1.5 acres of mostly open meadows and mountain brush patches (potential foraging and nesting habitat for neotropical birds) as part of the new trail construction. There would also be some indirect impacts from introducing a trail into an area that has previously not had a trail. Human and noise disturbance would increase due to easier access to the area.

Alternative C would not disturb neotropical migratory birds.

Aquatic Wildlife: Endangered, Threatened, Sensitive and Candidate Species

Affected Environment

Bonneville cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki utah*), a Forest Service Region-4 Sensitive species which has been petitioned for listing as Threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is known to inhabit Diamond Fork Creek and is suspected to inhabit

Sixth Water Creek, both of which are several miles away from the proposed trail locations. Both Monks Hollow and Long Hollow are intermittent streams that do not support Bonneville cutthroat trout.

Effects Analysis

The proposed alternatives would not impact Bonneville cutthroat trout habitat (see Effects Analysis, Soil and Water, pages 15 and 16).

Aquatic Wildlife: Management Indicator Species

Affected Environment

Management Indicator Species (MIS) are listed in Appendix B of the Uinta National Forest 2003 Land and Resource Management Plan. Aquatic MIS include Bonneville cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki utah*) and Colorado River cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki pleuriticus*).

Effects Analysis

The proposed alternatives would not impact Bonneville cutthroat trout or Colorado River cutthroat trout habitat (see Effects Analysis, Soil and Water, pages 15 and 16).

Cumulative Effects: TES and MIS Wildlife

Recreation Dispersed recreation/campsite improvements, and the Diamond Fork Group Sites are projects currently undergoing analysis or are due for implementation in the Diamond Fork watershed. The Diamond Fork watershed is receiving increasing demands for recreational opportunities. Construction of additional campsites, as well as improving existing sites, is a way to protect valuable riparian habitat located adjacent to the Diamond Fork Road. Although additional recreation use in Diamond Fork Canyon will cause some displacement of wildlife due to human disturbances, it is better to manage this disturbance to have the least effect on the wildlife. One of the proposed group sites would be located at the Monks Hollow Trailhead, and is intended for use by groups of ATV users.

Construction of the proposed action will help provide additional recreational opportunities, and further enhance the ability to manage recreation. Better recreation management will help to prevent further resource damage in the future.

CUP's Diamond Fork System. The Central Utah Project (CUP) project occupies lands that have been withdrawn for their activities. The Forest Service had limited control over these activities relative to development and construction of CUP facilities within this area.

The CUP had opened the Tanner Ridge Road for use in their constructions activities. The CUP pipeline was extended from a location approximately one mile north of Three Forks Trailhead to the Tanner Ridge Road. This involved removing the existing Diamond Fork road, laying the pipe, and replacing the road. In some sections this involved re-aligning the road to a new location. The Diamond Fork road runs adjacent to Diamond Fork Creek.

High flows going down Sixth Water Creek into Diamond Fork Creek have prevented beavers from using this area. The increased flows washed out the beaver dams. Now that the pipeline system is completed, and the creeks returned to a natural flow regime, the Diamond Fork Creek below the confluence with Sixth Water will provide suitable habitat for beavers to expand their range.

Restoration of the riparian areas will benefit the bald eagle, Western yellow-billed cuckoo, and beaver.

Diamond Fork Prescribed Burn. A decision has been signed that will allow prescribed burning within the Diamond Fork watershed. These burns were primarily designed to restore vegetation diversity within the watershed, and has a secondary effect as a fuels control project to help prevent catastrophic wildfires.

Riparian zones will be protected with a 300-foot buffer and there will be no loss of bald eagle, Western yellow-billed cuckoo, or beaver habitat from the burns.

Grazing. This watershed has been grazed over 100 years and will continue to be grazed. Grazing in the area has impacted soil, water and vegetation through erosion, water contamination, and removal and trampling of vegetation.

Wildlife will always be in competition with grazing for resources within the watershed.

Road Improvements. In 1996, the Central Utah Project (CUP) improved seven and a half (7.5) miles the Diamond Fork road from the mouth of the canyon to Red Ledges. This has provided easier access into the Diamond Fork watershed. The CUP completed Phase 2 of the project in July 2004. The project improved the Diamond Fork Road for an additional eight miles, extending the pavement to Springville Crossing.

Rays Valley Road was relocated and reconstructed in 2003 to remove the stream from the riparian corridor, correct safety hazards associated with the old road, and to improve access into the area.

Both of these road improvements will further encourage recreational use of the area. Construction of the proposed action will help provide additional recreational opportunities, and further enhance the ability to manage recreation. Better recreation management will help to prevent further resource damage in the future.

Plants: Endangered, Threatened, Sensitive and Candidate Species

Affected Environment

The following tables list Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate species (Table 2), and Forest Service Sensitive species (Table 3).

Table 2. Federally Threatened (T), Endangered (E) and Candidate (C) Species

Species	Suitable Habitat in the Project Area	Distribution
Ute-ladies' tresses (T) (<i>Spiranthes diluvialis</i>)	No	Early seral species in riparian habitat. Found on open floodplain areas in Provo, American Fork and Spanish Fork river drainages (DEIS 2001).
Deseret Milkvetch (E) (<i>Astragalus deserticus</i>)	No	Occurs in mixed sagebrush-mountain brush-juniper communities on red conglomerate and sandy areas between 5,000 to 6,000 feet elevation (Welsh, et al., 1993).
Clay Phacelia (E) (<i>Phacelia argillacea</i>)	No	Green River shale formation on steep sparsely vegetated slopes (6,000-6,400 feet elevation) (Welsh et al, 1993).

Table 3. Region 4 Forest Service Sensitive Species

Species	Suitable Habitat in the Project Area	Distribution
Barneby woody Aster (<i>Aster kingii</i> var. <i>barnebyana</i>)	No	Rock outcrops, cliffs and ledges. On lower elevations restricted to northern exposures. It has been found mainly on the Mt. Nebo area (southern Wasatch Mts.). Elevation 5,000-11,750 ft (Tuhy 1991).
Dainty moonwort (<i>Botrychium crenulatum</i>)	No	Wet meadows, marshes, and bogs. On the Uinta N.F., known only from Silver Meadow, western Uinta Mts., Wasatch county. Elevation 9,400 ft (Williams 1999).
Garrett bladderpod (<i>Lesquerella garrettii</i>)	No	Alpine, subalpine talus, and rocks outcrops. Davis, Salt Lake, Utah, and Wasatch Counties. Elevation 8,900-11,400 ft (Tuhy 1991).
Rockcress draba (<i>Draba densifolia</i> var. <i>apiculata</i>)	No	Alpine tundra and talus in rock strips above timberline. Spruce-fir krummholz, moist soils on receding snowbanks. Uinta Mts. Rare in Wasatch range (Salt Lake County) and Deep creek Mts. (western Juab County) (Welsh et al. 1993).
Wasatch jamesia (<i>Jamesia americana</i> var. <i>macrocalyx</i>)	No	Rock crevices and cliffs on mountain brush and spruce-fir communities. At lower elevation, it occurs in protected, mainly north facing outcrops. Elevation 5,690-9,000 ft (Welsh et al 1993).
Slender Moonwort (<i>Botrychium lineare</i>)	No	It has been found at sea level in cool climates, in Utah is most likely at higher elevations (about 1500-3000 m) in mountains, specific habitats have ranged from meadow dominated by knee-high grass, shaded woods and woodlands, grassy horizontal ledges on a north-facing limestone cliff, and a flat upland section of a river valley (Natureserve 2004). There has been one documented population found on the Wasatch-Cache NF none on the Uinta NF (Ut.DNR 2003).

Effects Analysis

The Diamond Fork Watershed includes some areas of Green River shale that could be suitable habitat for clay phacelia. However, no clay phacelia plants have been found in those areas that have been surveyed within the watershed, which are over five miles from the project areas of the two action alternatives. Neither of the Monks Hollow action alternatives would have impacts to that unoccupied habitat. Populations for Ute ladies'-tresses orchid within the Diamond Fork watershed have been found only adjacent to Diamond Fork creek itself. The orchids have not been found above about 6300 feet elevation. The Monks Hollow project areas are above this elevation, and overwhelmingly in upland areas. Neither of the action alternatives would add impacts to habitat or populations of the orchid. There is no habitat for the Deseret milkvetch in the Diamond Fork watershed, so the Monks Hollow alternatives would have no effect on the species. Surveys found no habitat or populations of the various sensitive plant species in the project areas, so the Monks Hollow alternative projects would have no impacts to the viability of those species.

Cumulative Effects

As discussed in the Effects Analysis section, there would be no direct or indirect impacts to Threatened, Endangered or Sensitive plants from this project. Therefore, there would be no incremental impact of the proposed actions when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

C. Social Environment Effects

The Diamond Fork Management Area is the cumulative effects analysis area for Social Environment Effects

Roadless Area Characteristics

Affected Environment

The project area is located within Inventoried Roadless Area 418016 in the Diamond Fork Management Area. Roadless area characteristics that would be impacted by Alternative A and B include apparent naturalness, remoteness and solitude.

The roadless area contains range improvements such as fences and water developments, approximately 26 miles of “cherry stemmed” roads that intrude into the area but are excluded from the roadless designation, two miles of non-system roads, approximately ten miles of non-motorized trail and 38 miles of motorized trail, nine miles of overhead powerline, and an electronic transmission site. These structures give the roadless area a reduced baseline quality for apparent naturalness, remoteness and solitude.

Effects Analysis

Alternative A

- *Apparent naturalness.* The construction of a new trail across relatively undisturbed ground would reduce the apparent naturalness along a 1.2 mile corridor of the project area. This would be caused by constructing an un-natural feature, the trail, where none currently exists and also by bringing the un-natural presence of OHVs to this 1.2 mile corridor. Increased OHV use along the entire Monks Hollow-Teat Mountain trail system would also likely occur. This increased motorized use would further reduce the apparent naturalness of the area by increasing the presence of OHVs.
- *Remoteness.* The construction of 1.2 miles of new trail would reduce the remoteness of the project area. The connector trail would provide access to this area that would otherwise be accessible only by cross-country foot travel.
- *Solitude.* Alternative A would reduce opportunities for solitude in the project area by increasing the probability of encountering others and by increasing the presence of OHVs. Reduced solitude would occur along the entire Monks Hollow-Teat Mountain trail system.

Alternative B

- *Apparent naturalness.* The construction of a new trail across relatively undisturbed ground would reduce the apparent naturalness along a 2.1 mile corridor of the project area. This would be caused by constructing an un-natural feature, the trail, where none currently exists and also by bringing the un-natural presence of OHVs to this 2.1

mile corridor. Increased motorized use of the Monks Hollow–Teat Mountain trail system would also likely occur. This increased OHV presence would further reduce the apparent naturalness of the area.

- *Remoteness.* The construction of 2.1 miles of new trail would reduce the remoteness of the project area. The connector trail would provide access to this area that would otherwise be accessible only by cross-country foot travel.
- *Solitude.* Alternative B would reduce opportunities for solitude in the project area by increasing the probability of encountering others and by increasing the presence of OHVs. Reduced solitude would occur along the entire Monks Hollow-Teat Mountain trail system.

The 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule does not preclude the construction of motorized trails within inventoried roadless areas. The Roadless Area Conservation Rule states “Nothing in this [rule] . . . was intended to prohibit the authorized construction, reconstruction, or maintenance of motorized or non-motorized trails that are classified and managed as trails” (US CFR, 2001). Alternatives A and B would both impact roadless area characteristics, however neither would violate the Roadless Area Conservation Rule.

Alternative C

The no-action alternative would not affect inventoried roadless area characteristics.

Cumulative Effects

The following previously described past, present and future projects would, in combination with this project, have a cumulative effect on roadless area characteristics:

- The Monks Hollow trailhead now has a bathroom and increased parking space that also accommodates trailer camping.
- The Diamond Fork group-sites campground would be constructed close to the Monks Hollow trailhead.

Both of these projects will likely draw more OHV users to the Monks Hollow-Teat Mountain trail system, reducing apparent naturalness, remoteness, and solitude in the roadless area.

Recreation

Affected Environment

The Diamond Fork Management Area is located close to the Wasatch Front and is therefore a popular location for outdoor recreation. Recreational opportunities in this area include developed and dispersed camping, hiking, mountain biking, horseback

riding, OHV use, rock climbing, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, soaking in hot springs, and pleasure driving.

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is a framework for defining classes of outdoor recreation environments, activities, and experience opportunities. There are seven ROS classes: Primitive, Semi-primitive Non-motorized, Semi-primitive Motorized, Roaded Natural, Roaded Modified, Rural, and Urban. The project area falls within ROS classes Semi-primitive Motorized, Roaded Natural, and Roaded Modified.

Effects Analysis

Alternatives A and B would impact recreation in the Diamond Fork Management Area primarily by increasing OHV opportunities and attracting more OHV users to the area.

Developed and dispersed camping use would likely increase.

Hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding opportunities would increase since the Monks Hollow-Teat Mountain trail system would be open to these uses, however because the trail system would be highly used by OHVs there may be no increase in these non-motorized uses.

Wildlife viewing and hunting opportunities could increase as a result of the increased access to the area, or decrease as a result of increased OHVs in the area displacing the wildlife.

Pleasure driving, rock climbing, fishing, and hot spring soaking would not be affected.

The proposed alternatives and resulting recreational use would be appropriate for the ROS classes designated within the project area.

Cumulative Effects

The following previously described past, present and future projects would, in combination with this project, have a cumulative effect on recreation:

- Sixth Water and Diamond Fork Creek Restoration
- Private land acquisition (increased public access)
- Monks Hollow and Three Forks trailhead improvements
- Diamond Fork group-sites campground construction
- Fishing access parking and restroom construction
- Red Ledges day use area construction
- Education and interpretive sites construction
- Sawmill Hollow and Fifth Water trailhead improvements
- Dispersed campsites hardening

The Sixth Water and Diamond Fork Creek Restoration, private land acquisition, and fishing access parking and restroom construction will increase opportunities for fishing. The Diamond Fork group-sites campground construction and dispersed campsites hardening will increase opportunities for camping. The Monks Hollow, Three Forks,

Sawmill Hollow, and Fifth Water trailhead improvements will increase and improve trail opportunities. The Red Ledges construction and education and interpretive sites construction will increase opportunities for day use. This proposal will increase trail opportunities. The cumulative effect of these projects when added together is a general increase in recreation opportunities in the Diamond Fork Management Area.

Cultural Resources

Affected Environment

A heritage resource archaeological and historic site survey was conducted for both existing and proposed trails in the project area. It examined areas which might be directly or indirectly impacted by the project. No sites of any kind were found.

Effects Analysis

The Utah State Historic Preservation Office has concurred that there would be no historic properties (significant sites) affected by the project.

Cumulative Effects

There would be no incremental impact of the proposed actions when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the Diamond Fork Management area.

Range Management

Affected Environment

The adjacent “Hollows” and “Waters” units of the Diamond Fork Cattle Allotment are topographically separated along much of their border. Where the trail routes of Alternatives A and B are proposed, the border between these two grazing units is a ridgeline. There is a concern that the proposed trail or its alternative would affect grazing management by creating a path that the cattle would follow between two units of the Diamond Fork Allotment.

Effects Analysis

Under both Alternatives A and B, the constructed trail could allow cattle to travel between these two management units of the Diamond Fork Allotment. This would have an undesirable effect on the management of grazing within this allotment. Under Alternatives A and B this effect would be mitigated through the installation of a cattle guard and fence.

Cumulative Effects

There would be no incremental impact of the proposed actions when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the Diamond Fork Management Area.

Environmental Justice and Civil Rights

Affected Environment

Executive Order 12898 established environmental justice as a Federal agency priority. Federal agencies are to consider the disproportional effect their actions may have on minority and low income populations.

Environmental Effects

There would be no disproportional environmental effects on any minority or low income populations. None of the alternatives would have disproportional impacts on any group based on income, race, creed, religion, sex or sexual preference.

Cumulative Effects

There would be no incremental impact of the proposed actions when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the Diamond Fork Management Area.

IV. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The Forest Service consulted the following individuals and Federal and State agencies during the development of this environmental assessment:

ID TEAM MEMBERS:

Duane Resare, Resource Assistant, ID Team Leader

Karen Hartman, Wildlife Biologist

Denise VanKeuren, Botanist

Charmaine Thompson, Archaeologist

Renae Bragonje, Range Specialist

Matt Keyes, Natural Resource Manager

FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

Utah State Historic Preservation Office

V. APPENDICES

A. References

B. Public Involvement

Appendix A

References

DeGraff, R.M., V.E.Scott, R.H.Hamre, L.Ernst, S.H.Anderson. 1991. *Forest and Rangeland Birds of the United States*. USDA Forest Service Agriculture Handbook 688.

Diamond Fork Area Assessment. 2000. Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission/USDA Forest Service. Uinta National Forest. Agency report.

Final Report of Lower Diamond Fork Breeding Bird Surveys, 1996. Prepared by Elisabeth M. Ammon

Keller, Kent R., Raptor Consultant, 1996. Golden Eagle nesting Survey Report for the Diamond Fork Canyon pipeline Construction Project. Final report submitted to the Central Utah Water Conservancy District.

NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. 2004. Comprehensive report for slender moonwort. Printed out on Jan. 8, 2004, and on file at Uinta N. F. Supervisor's Office.

Stokes, Donald and Lillian. 1996. *Stokes Field Guide to Birds*. Little, Brown and Company. Boston.

Stukey, Eric. 2003. Utah Off Highway Registration Transactions by County and Fiscal Year. Utah Parks Department. Salt Lake City, UT.

Tuhy, J.S. 1991. *Aster kingii (king aster) and Lesquerella garrettii (Garrett bladderpod) on the Uinta and Wasatch-Cache national forests*. Final report for challenge cost share agreements with the Uinta and Wasatch-Cache National Forests. Utah Natural Heritage Program. Salt Lake City, UT.

United States Code of Federal Regulations. 2001. Title 36. Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records. Washington D.C.

United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 1984. *Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan*. On file at the Supervisor's Office.

United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 1991. *Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive species of the Intermountain Region*. Ogden, UT.

United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 1993. *Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Amendment*. On file at the Supervisor's Office.

United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2003. *Uinta National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Amendment*. On file at the Supervisor's Office.

United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. 2001. Federally listed and proposed endangered and threatened species in Utah as of September 2001. Salt Lake City, Utah. Unpublished report. On file at the Spanish Fork Ranger District.

United States Department of Interior. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2001. *12-Month Finding for a Petition to List the Yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus Americanus*) in the Western Continental States*. Federal Register: July 5, 2001 (volume 6, number 143).

Utah Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife Resources. 1997. Utah Sensitive List. UDWR, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Utah Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife Resources. 1998. *Inventory of sensitive vertebrate and invertebrate species and ecosystems*. [Internet]: <http://www.utahcdc.usu.edu/ucdc/ViewReports/Vertrpt.pdf>.

Utah Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife Resources. 2003. GIS Data for Sensitive Species. Unpublished. On file at Pleasant Grove R. D. Botrychium lineare entries.

Webb, M. 2001, 1999, 1996, 1995, 1994. Unpublished bird survey data. On file at the Supervisors Office.

Welsh, S. L., N. D. Atwood, S. Goodrich, L. C. Higgins. 1993. *A Utah flora, 2nd Edition*. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University. Pp 298, 361, 403, 637.

Williams, Richard. 1999. *TES species of the Ashley, Uinta, and Wasatch-Cache national forests (northern Utah ecoregion), updated September 1999*. Unpubl. On file at the Uinta National Forest Supervisor's Office, Provo, UT. Page with Dainty Moonwort entry.

Williams, Richard. 2001. Interoffice memo on the distribution of the Western yellow-billed cuckoo on the Uinta National Forest dated August 30, 2001.

Appendix B
Public Involvement

Public Comment Summary – Monks Hollow Motorized Trail

Scoping is the process of gathering important facts and information relative to a proposed activity. Information can come from any interested source, including the general public, special interest groups, the Forest Service, and other agencies. Information received from these sources is used to develop the issues and concerns surrounding proposed management activities.

This document provides information about the comments the Forest Service received from the public in response to scoping efforts and how we addressed those comments.

Public scoping announcements and dates

Scoping Document	Date of Document	End of comment period	Comments Received
Initial scoping letter and legal notice, Provo Daily Herald.	12/17/2003 (letter) 12/19/2003 (legal)	01/20/2004	4

Comments generated from the public and how they were addressed.

Date received	Who commented	Issues, concerns, and opportunities	How the comments were addressed
12/18/03	Michael Kelsey	1) Opposed to ATVs on all Forest Service lands. 2) Likens the effects of ATVs on soils to the effects of sheep over-grazing.	1) Comment noted. 2) See EA Chapter 3, Effects Analysis – Soil and Water.
01/14/04	James Thompson	1) Not concerned with this proposal because the Monks Hollow-Teat Mountain area is already roaded. 2) Wardsworth Creek, 5 th and 6 th Water Creeks, Cottonwood Creek and Spanish Fork Peak should be protected from motorized use.	1) Comment noted. 2) Comment noted. Outside the scope of this project analysis.
01/22/04	Joel Ban Utah Environmental Congress	1) Incorporate by reference all previous appeals and scoping comments submitted by UEC. 2) Management Indicator Species analysis must include population trend data. 3) Diamond Fork Creek from the Spanish Fork confluence to the 6 th Water Creek Creek confluence is on the State 303(d) list, and how this project would comply with the Clean Water Act and LRMP for achieving water quality goals should be documented.	1) Comment noted. Forest Service responses to previous appeals and comments are located in the project file and are available at the Spanish Fork Ranger District. 2) See EA Chapter 3, Section B, Biological Resource Effects. 3) This segment of stream is no longer listed as 303(d). See EA Chapter 3, Section A, Physical Environment Effects.

Date received	Who commented	Issues, concerns, and opportunities	How the comments were addressed
		<p>4) Water quality monitoring and modeling needs to occur to determine if the project complies with the Clean Water Act.</p> <p>5) A detailed cumulative effects analysis should describe impacts to water quality, soil, other management projects, and wildlife.</p> <p>6) Biological effects analysis should include Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive species, species of concern (eagles), amphibians, aquatic macroinvertebrates, and Ute ladies'-tresses.</p> <p>7) Potential impacts to culturally and historically significant sites should be disclosed.</p> <p>8) It is not clear how this project would achieve Forest Plan Desired Future Conditions.</p>	<p>4) See EA Chapter 3, Section A, Physical Environment Effects.</p> <p>5) See EA Chapter 3, Sections A-C, Cumulative Impacts.</p> <p>6) See EA Chapter 3, Section B, Biological Resource Effects.</p> <p>7) See EA Chapter 3, Section C, Social Effects.</p> <p>8) See EA Chapter 1, Purpose and Need for Action.</p>
01/29/04	Brian Hawthorne Utah Shared Access Alliance	<p>1) The controversy and probable litigation associated with this simple project shows what happens when the definition of "roadless" becomes so loose that areas with roads, transmission corridors, etc. qualify for inclusion as an Inventoried Roadless Area.</p> <p>2) The public should be made aware that all "motorized trails" are available for non-motorized visitors.</p> <p>3) Encourages the Forest Service to contact the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council, the Utah OHV Program and other OHV groups regarding successful strategies for OHV management.</p> <p>4) The name of the project should be changed to "Monks Hollow Multiple Use Trail".</p> <p>5) The proposed action does not go far enough to meet the purpose and need for the project.</p> <p>6) The level of analysis is appropriate.</p> <p>7) The 2003 EA was deficient in the analysis and disclosure of socioeconomic impacts to the human environment, ignoring positive effects.</p>	<p>1) Comment noted. Outside the scope of this project.</p> <p>2) See EA Chapter 1, Proposed Action, and Chapter 2, Alternatives Fully Explored.</p> <p>3) Comment noted.</p> <p>4) Comment noted. See response to comment #2.</p> <p>5) See EA Chapter 1, Proposed Action and Non-significant Issues (Issue 12).</p> <p>6) Comment noted.</p> <p>7) See EA Chapter 3, Section C, Social Effects.</p>

Date received	Who commented	Issues, concerns, and opportunities	How the comments were addressed
		<p>8) The new EA must properly disclose the cumulative effects of the new Forest Plan, which increased opportunities for non-motorized recreation and eliminated substantial opportunity for OHV recreation.</p> <p>9) Only a small percentage of hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians mind the sights and sounds of OHV users.</p>	<p>8) Comment noted. This project is driven by Forest Plan direction and this EA is tiered to the Forest Plan. Cumulative effects of the Forest Plan are disclosed in the 2003 Forest Plan EIS.</p> <p>9) Comment noted. The Forest Service is not aware of scientific evidence to support this claim.</p>