



File Code: 1950-1

Date: August 3, 2004

Greetings:

On July 13, 2004, southern Indiana was hit by a large storm which produced straight line winds of up to 80 miles per hour. The storm severely damaged the South Slope Loop in the Celina Recreation Area, and that campground is currently closed. Although the winds did not affect the North Face Loop in the same recreation area as severely as they did the South Slope Loop, the winds severely damaged quite a number of individual trees there. These hazard trees, as well as the many damaged trees in the South Slope Loop, need to be removed for the safety of recreational users and the safe operation of the campground. This letter outlines the Hoosier National Forest's proposal to allow these campgrounds to return to full and safe use.



Two examples of some of the damage at the South Slope Campground of the Celina Recreation Area

Purpose and Need

The Celina Recreation Area is in Management Area 7.1 as described in the Land and Resource Management Plan – Hoosier National Forest (*Forest Plan*). Relevant guidance and desired conditions for Management area 7.1 in the *Forest Plan* include:

- Vegetative management is done to maintain or enhance existing recreation, road and utility corridors, wildlife, educational or watershed values (*Forest Plan 2-45*).
- Maintain snag and den trees in order to enhance the chances of people seeing wildlife, unless they present a hazard or reduce scenic values (*Forest Plan 2-45*).
- Vegetative management in these areas focuses on hazard tree removal, flower, nut, or berry production, scenic enhancement, and specific area objectives, such as tight canopy with open forest floor, or producing larger trees (*Forest Plan 2-47*).

The primary purpose of this project is to reduce the current threat to safety of the campground users and make the campground usable by removing hazard trees to allow South Slope and North Face to return to full and safe use.



Project Proposal

We are proposing hazard tree removal at 12 campsites within the South Slope Loop of the Celina Recreation Area. Each site is approximately 0.25 acres. An additional acre of treatment would occur in and around the camping area for a total of four acres of treatment. At some campsites, this would involve the removal of almost all of the trees (see picture above), while others have very few trees to be removed.

The North Face Loop of the Celina Recreation Area currently has two campsites closed due to hazards. The winds also affected several other sites and left limbs and trees that could fall and injure someone. The Forest would remove approximately 60 trees there to reopen these campsites, remove trees that potentially could fall and injure recreationists, and ensure safe use of the campground.

We would accomplish this proposal for Celina Recreation Area by bringing in a professional logging crew to remove the hazard trees. The remaining tops and branches would be chipped and either removed from the site or used as mulch in some of the damaged areas. There are also stumps and root wads that will be removed or ground up. Some wood may be sold as firewood.

How to Respond

Please mail your comments on this project to District Ranger Jim Denoncour; Hoosier National Forest; Tell City Ranger District; Attn: Celina Recreation Area Hazard Tree Removal project; 248 15th Street; Tell City, IN 47586. Comments may be sent electronically to r9_hoosier_website@fs.fed.us. When commenting, please include:

1. Title of the document (Celina Recreation Area Hazard Tree Removal) on which the comment is being submitted (in the subject line for electronic comments).
2. Your name, address, telephone number, organization represented, and title.
3. Specific concerns, facts, and supporting reasons regarding your comments.

Comments must be received by August 20, 2004. A decision on this project may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment because it is within a category identified by the Chief of the Forest Service in Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.15 section 31.12. This removal of hazard trees is within the category 31.12(5) "Repair and maintenance of recreation sites and facilities."

If you have any questions or need any further information, please contact Lester Wadzinski at 812-275-5987.

Sincerely,

/s/ Gary B. Dinkel (for)
JAMES E. DENONCOUR
District Ranger