

# Appendix J

## Public Involvement

### Communication Plan for the Roads Analysis Process

#### Goal

To inform stakeholders about the Road Analysis Process and how it will be applied to the Routt National Forest.

#### Objectives

Assure that our stakeholders understand the basic purpose of this project.

Assure that these stakeholders know what this process is, i.e., an *analysis* of existing and future road systems, and *not a decision-making process*.

#### Background

In January of 1998, the Forest Service announced its intent to revise its road policy. According to the Chief, “The new road policy will improve public access to the forests we all love while diminishing the risks of erosion and water quality degradation.

It shifts the agency’s policy from *developing* its transportation system to *managing* it in an environmentally and financially responsible way.”

The new policy contains the following requirements:

- ♦ Every administrative headquarters must have a Forest Transportation Atlas available.
- ♦ A forest-scale road analysis process (RAP) must be completed.
- ♦ Any project decision signed after July 12, 2001 which involves road construction or reconstruction must have a RAP completed.

Interim requirements will apply until the forest-scale RAP is complete and incorporated into the Forest Plan, unless the Forest Supervisor determines that a plan amendment is not necessary.

#### Talking Points

We are working on the creation of a Forest-level Roads Analysis Process (RAP). This analysis will:

- ♦ Inventory and map all main arterial and collector roads and the intention for managing these roads.
- ♦ Provide guidelines for addressing road management issues and priorities.
- ♦ Identify significant social and environmental issues, concerns and opportunities to be addressed at the site-specific scale.
- ♦ Evaluate forest management and recreational values, environmental risks, and social concerns
- ♦ Document coordination efforts with other government agencies and jurisdictions.

This is an analytical and reporting effort, *not a decision-making action*. It is “broad brush” and does not focus on individual roads. That level of analysis will be performed on a road and site-specific basis when discrete road status decisions are made. At this point we need to learn of stakeholders generalized issues and concerns in the realm of National Forest road management.

## Coordination

Although the Road Management Policy was announced along with the unveiling of an initiative to suspend road construction and reconstruction in certain unroaded areas on national forest and grasslands, the “Roadless Initiative” is reasonably discrete from the RAP process. The RAP process does not direct that roads be managed in a certain way; rather, it is a report which will accomplish the items listed in above in the Talking Points.

The foregoing points to a level of coordination with stakeholders that is broad, rather than specific. This is because the process will use a second, more site-specific (or road-specific) analysis process when watershed and/or project scale RAPs are applied. More intensive public involvement will occur at this later level of analysis.

## Strategy

The tone of this communication effort will be low-key, informative, aimed at stakeholders with a direct and meaningful interest in National Forest road system management. This is appropriate for two main reasons; first, this is not a “NEPA” analysis requiring a legally mandated level of public scoping and involvement (that will come later, when road-specific decisions are made), and secondly, this effort will be completed by the end of March, necessitating an adequate, but not over-done, public involvement effort.

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## Schedule

Action	“By” Date	Responsible Individual
Produce a short talking points package for Team, District Rangers, Forest employees	Done Nov.8	Diann
Informal Contact with County Commissioners		District Rangers
Jackson County – Chuck Oliver	Done 12/2	
Grand County - Chuck Oliver	Jan. 14, 2003	
Rio Blanco – Howard Sargent	Jan. 13, 2003	
Routt – Howard and Kim Vogel	Jan. 14, 2003	
Moffat – Kim Vogel	Jan. 20, 2003	
Garfield – Howard Sargent	Jan. 6, 2003	
Informal Contact with Interest Groups (Road & Bridge Departments, Recreation groups, etc.)	Nov. – Jan.	District Rangers
Informal contact with state government and Congressional staffers	Dec. 6 & 10	Diann
Review success of above actions and determine if further efforts are indicated	Ongoing	Liz and Diann

## **Public Involvement Results**

The following notes summarize issues and discussions from the meetings (December – March 2003) with County Commissioners regarding the Routt RAP.

**Jackson County**, Dec. 18 – Chuck Oliver met with County Commissioners Rick Wyatt, Tootie Crowner, and Dennis Brinker. Chuck explained the RAP. The commissioners said they were glad the forest is doing this and reminded him that it's important to keep the county in the loop since in the past the FS has closed county roads without involving the county. The commissioners asked if this process would help clarify which roads were county roads. Chuck clarified what RAP does and does not do. The commissioner would like to see the map when it's done.

**Garfield County**, Jan. 6 – Howard Sargent met with commissioners Walt Stove, John Wyatt Martin, Larry McCown. Also present were the county attorney and administrator. Howard reviewed the RAP. The commissioners stated they would like to see two-track roads kept open for recreation, hunting access, and range and water facilities.

**Rio Blanco County**, Jan. 13 – Howard Sargent and Diann Pipher met with Commissioners Don Davis, Kim Cook and Forrest Nelson, Jerry Steele and Mark Leeper of the Road and Bridge Department. Howard reviewed the RAP. Mr. Steele stated that the Routt National Forest is exceptional in its assistance to and cooperation with the county, and the county appreciates that very much. Mr. Davis stated that he is a Northwest Colorado representative to the National Association of County Governments and very much in support of local managers managing local public lands. The county is abandoning some roads mostly on private land, but none that access the forest. The remainder of the discussion was about Schedule A Roads.

**Grand County**, Jan. 14 – Chuck Oliver and Diann Pipher met with County Commissioners Duane Dailey, Jim Newberry, and Robert Anderson. Other county employees attended, including the road and bridge department. Chuck reviewed the RAP. The commissioners asked if this would improve road access. Chuck responded that this is an inventory and that decisions will be made on site-specific projects. The county commissioners said they had many issues with county roads that go from private to private, private to public, and the problem gets increasingly complicated as more development occurs. There was some discussion about where the road to Matheson Reservoir ends. Chuck met briefly with a county employee to help him get GIS information to correct the Parks District boundary on the County map. The commissioners would like to see the map and inventory when completed.

**Routt County**, Jan. 14 – Kim Vogel and Howard Sargent met with County Commissioners Doug Monger, Nancy Stahoviak, and Dan Ellison. Howard explained the RAP process. The commissioners stated they could like to see as many roads as possible kept open. The commissioners asked that the FS be sure to work closely with the road and bridge department. They also asked if the FS was aware that Moffat County was asserting RS2477 rights. The remainder of the meeting was spent talking about winter recreation issues on the Routt NF, since one of the commissioners had received a call from the public.

**Moffat County**, March 19 – Kim Vogel met with Moffat County Commissioners Darryl Steele and Les Hampton. Issues were similar to the other counties, with the addition of a discussion regarding RS2477. Moffat County is asserting ownership on approximately 55 miles of road on the Routt National Forest and many more miles of BLM lands. The commissioners requested the copies of the maps and RAP documents when the process is completed.