
File Code: 1950
Date: August 3, 2017

Dear Partners, Stakeholders, and Interested members of the public,

Thank you for your interest and participation in the Goat Mountain Hardrock Mineral Prospecting Permits project. The Forest Service in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared a modified environmental assessment, finding of no significant impact and draft decision for the project. These documents are now available for your review at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=46996>.

The draft decision being made by the Forest Service is to provide consent to the BLM to approve an application to prospect or explore for minerals on National Forest System lands. After consideration of the environmental analysis and public input, I have selected alternative 4 (drill site riparian avoidance). Alternative 4 would provide Forest Service consent with specified conditions to best address the balance between resource use and resource protection, with an emphasis on the protection of riparian reserves. The actions proposed in the draft decision notice are activities implementing a land management plan and not authorized under the HFRA, and are subject to 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B.

How to file an Objection and Timeframe

Objections will only be accepted from those who have previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project during scoping or other designated opportunity for public comment in accordance with §218.5(a). Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project unless based on new information arising after the designated comment opportunities (§218.8(c)).

To submit objections electronically, please go to: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=46996>. Written objections may also be mailed to: Forest Supervisor Gina Owens, Objection Reviewing Officer, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Attn: 1570 Appeals and Objections, 501 E. 5th Street #404, Vancouver, WA 98661; or by facsimile to (360) 891-5045. Hand-delivered objections must be received at the following address during normal business hours, (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday except Federal holidays): Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Visitor Center, 1501 E. Evergreen Blvd., Vancouver, WA 98661. Include the project title, "Goat Mountain Hardrock Mineral Prospecting Permits", in your letter.

Objections must be submitted within 45 calendar days following the publication of this notice in *The Chronicle*, Centralia, WA. When the time period expires on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, comments shall be accepted until the end of the next Federal working day. The publication date of the legal notice in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by another source. The regulations prohibit extending the time to file an objection.



At a minimum, an objection must include the following (§218.8(d)):

1. The objector's name and address, with a telephone number, if available;
2. A signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for email may be filed with the objection);
3. When multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector (verification of the identity of the lead objector shall be provided upon request);
4. The name of the proposed project, the name and title of the Responsible Official, and the name(s) of the National Forest(s) and/or Ranger District(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented;
5. A description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the proposed project if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis or draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and
6. A statement that demonstrates connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection.

Incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided in §218.8(b). It is the objector's responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer pursuant to §218.9. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process.

Additional information can be obtained from: Charlie Sharp, Environmental Coordinator, at charlesmsharp@fs.fed.us or (970) 403-6174.

Sincerely,



GAR ABBAS
District Ranger