

Colorado Springs Utilities

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ATTN: SHELBY
Limberis

To: USFS, WR N.F.

From: Eric Howell Colo. Sprs. Utilities

Fax #: 970 827 9343

Sender's Phone #: 719 866 8455

Phone: 970 827 5161

Date: 1-31-2019

Re: Scoping Comments - W.R. Veg Mang. Project

Number of Pages (Including Cover Sheet): 3

☐

URGENT

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PLEASE REVIEW

☐

PLEASE COMMENT

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PLEASE REPLY

COMMENTS:

Comments for W.R. Forest-wide
Veg Mang. Project.

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White River National Forest
Attn: Shelby Limberis
P.O. Box 190
Minturn, CO 98645

January 31, 2019

RE: White River National Forest, Forest Wide Vegetation Management Project

To Whom It May Concern:

With reference to December 17, 2018 request for scoping comment regarding the White River National Forest, Forest Wide Vegetation Management Project, Colorado Springs Utilities respectfully submits the following information and comments.

The City of Colorado Springs, with a population of approximately 480,000, receives and delivers nearly 99% of its water supply through three major river basins: South Platte River, Colorado River, and the Arkansas River. Colorado Springs Utilities (Utilities) water supply and storage system(s) utilizes several transmission lines, reservoirs, and other infrastructure that lie within the Pike, San Isabel, and White River National Forests. With respect to the White River Forest Wide Vegetation Management Project, Utilities owns and operates various transmission pipelines, tunnels, and reservoirs for the delivery and storage of source water supplies as well as being a recipient of water through the federal Frying Pan – Arkansas Water Project all of which fall within areas of the White River National Forest.

Utilities participates with the USFS through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is focused on watershed protection activities by collaborating on various forest management, watershed restoration and other natural resource management activities. It is of great interest to provide comments and engage in future planning efforts that could yield joint funding arrangements to see work completed in areas of interest to both the USFS and Utilities in areas of shared interest per the framework of the proposal. Ideally, Utilities would like to work closely with the White River to assist in all opportunities of planning and how projects could align under the existing 2018 – 2023 5 Year Action Plan associated with eh joint MOU.

Utilities is in support of the White River to utilize a Categorical Exclusion to complete the minimum requirement for the National Environmental Policy Act requirements to expeditiously advance the environmental analysis and decision to move project work to implementation.

1521 Hancock Expressway
P.O. Box 1103, Mail Code 1825
Colorado Springs, CO 80947-1825


Phone 719-668-5300
Fax 719-668-5541/719-668-5329
<http://www.csu.org>

Utilities is also interested in the extent of potential acres to be analyzed on an annual or project basis to understand the extent of vegetation management. It is our hope that as opportunities arise that projects that fall within priority watersheds of shared interest to the USFS and Utilities, funding support through the USFS and Utilities MOU can be optimized for such partnership work.

If there are any questions I can entertain, please feel free to contact me by email or phone.

Thank you,

Eric Howell



Eric Howell
Colorado Springs Utilities
Forest Program Manager
Deputy Chief – Catamount Wildland Fire Team

Office 719-668-4554
Email ehowell@csu.org