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Comments: Comment - draft plan - CGNF

Sir

I am writing to ask that you consider aviation as an acceptable recreational use of the land and water resources that you are tasked with managing.

* USFS airstrips are an important recreational and operational part of the USFS infrastructure. Please ask the FS to change all instances in the Proposed Action where "trails and roads" appear, to read: "trails, roads, and airstrips".

* In many places throughout the proposed document, various forms of recreation are listed and discussed. The 2012 Planning Rule mentions aviation as a valid form of recreation. However, the Proposed Action restricts aviation activities. Please ask the FS to restate aviation as a legitimate access method to National forest lands.

* Many USFS airstrips are maintained through joint efforts of the USFS and volunteer groups, including the RAF. Please ask the FS to revise the Proposed Action to include guidance for planners on the importance of coordinating with volunteer groups.

* The Chief of the USFS, the heads of other agencies such as the BLM, and the US Congress, have all published comments on the significance of airstrips as part of an overall balanced public lands transportation system. Unfortunately, not all USFS planners and managers are familiar with the airstrips within their planning area. Please ask the FS to place greater emphasis on their airstrip infrastructure through direct inclusion of airstrip guidance and instructions to planners in the Proposed Action document.

* Forest Planners may not have detailed knowledge of airstrips; they need instructions on where to find that information. The Proposed Action clearly outlines sources of information when accessing and planning for roads, trails, historic sites, utility corridors, etc. Airstrips need the same considerations so planners will fully understand airfield planning requirements and issues. Please ask the FS to include sources of information on airstrips in the Proposed Action document.

* Within the next 10 years, the bulk of baby boomers will retire, increasing pressure on USFS recreational airstrips. The Forest Plan must provide planners with the tools to recognize, assess, and adapt to this increasing demand. Please ask the FS to include recreational aviation and airstrips in order to encompass potential future demand on airstrips.

Thanks.

Jim

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