

File Code: 1950
Date: 8/2/24

Dear Interested Party:

The Forest Service is seeking comments on the draft environmental assessment for the Integrated Management of Target Shooting on the Pike National Forest Project. The project addresses the need to provide opportunities for target shooting on National Forest System lands, to identify areas unsuitable for dispersed target shooting, to identify locations to be developed as shooting ranges, and to establish a conditions-based adaptive management framework to manage target shooting in the future.

Dispersed target shooting — where forest visitors set up targets and practice shooting in an undesignated, undeveloped location — is a legal use of National Forest System lands that increased in popularity over the past decade. Unfortunately, the number of forest visitors who shoot in an unsafe manner has also increased. These activities have resulted in increasing levels of resource damage, shooting-related wildfires, injuries, and at least one fatality.

The environmental assessment summarizes the potential environmental effects of three alternatives: the no action alternative, where no changes would be made in the management of target shooting activities; the proposed action, which would identify and close areas unsuitable for dispersed target shooting activities, develop at least one shooting range on each ranger district (meaning a minimum of three shooting ranges, with nine potential sites identified), and define an adaptive management framework to manage target shooting in the future; and a reduced-closure alternative, which is the same as the proposed action but would close a smaller amount of area to target shooting. The project will not affect legal hunting or archery activities.

The environmental assessment and supporting documents are available for review on the project website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=57807>. To obtain a hard copy of the documents, please contact Jennifer DeWoody, NEPA Planner, at (970) 568-2692 or via email at jennifer.dewoody@usda.gov.

How to comment and timeframe

The Integrated Management of Target Shooting project is an activity implementing a land management plan. This activity is subject to pre-decisional objection under subparts A and B of 36 CFR Part 218.

Comments on this proposed action will be accepted for 30 days beginning on the first day after the date of publication of a legal notice in the *Pueblo Chieftain*, the newspaper of record (36 CFR 218.25). If the comment period ends on a Saturday, Sunday or Federal holiday, comments will be accepted until the end of the next Federal working day. A timely submission will be determined as outlined in 36 CFR 218.25(a)(4). It is the responsibility of the sender to ensure timely receipt of any comments submitted.



Only individuals or entities (who submit timely, specific written comments about this project during this or another public comment period) will be eligible to file an objection. Other eligibility requirements include, in part, the commenter's name, postal address, title of the proposed action, and signature or other verification of identity upon request and identification of the individual or entity who authored the comment(s). All written comments received, including names and addresses of commenters, shall be placed in the project file and shall become a matter of public record for this project. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the Agency with the ability to provide the respondent with subsequent environmental documents.

Comments can be submitted either via the online comment portal on the project website (click on Comment/Object on Project) (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=57807>), by mail to: Ryan Nehl, c/o Jennifer DeWoody, IDT Lead, Target Shooting Project, 601 S. Weber St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903; or by facsimile: 719-477-4233. Please include "Comments on Target Shooting Project" on the envelope or FAX cover sheet. Office hours, for those who wish to hand deliver their comments, are 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, Monday – Friday (except Federal holidays). Acceptable formats for electronic comments are text or html e-mail, Adobe portable document format, and formats viewable in Microsoft Office applications.

For additional information, please contact Jennifer DeWoody, NEPA Planner, 601 S. Weber St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903, by phone at (970) 568-2692, or via email jennifer.dewoody@usda.gov.

Thank you for your interest in the management of National Forest System lands.

Sincerely,

RYAN NEHL
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Date: 2024.08.02
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RYAN NEHL

Forest and Grassland Supervisor