**Updates on Rio Grande National Forest Plan Revision**

May 2017

**Background**

The United States Forest service is currently in the process of revising the 1996 management plan for the 1.83 million acre Rio Grande National Forest located in southcentral Colorado. The new plan is scheduled to be finalized summer 2018 and will guide the management of the Rio Grande National Forest for the next 15-20 years, including activities such as wildfire management, grazing, timber production, recreation, wildlife management, and firewood cutting. It is important to be active by submitting comments and attending public meetings during the revision process to ensure proper management in the future. Click [here](https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/riogrande/home/?cid=stelprd3819044&width=fullhttps://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/riogrande/home/?cid=stelprd3819044&width=full) to visit the Rio Grande National Forest website for more information.

**Timeline and Resources**

* **July 2016- present:** Resource Assessments

Throughout the review process the U.S. Forest Service has compiled scientific evidence and public opinions regarding a variety of resources within the Rio Grande National Forest, including recreation. These assessments address the sustainability of social, economic and ecological resources within the plan area. Click [here](https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/riogrande/home/?cid=fseprd479245&width=full) to see all of the assessments released to date.

* **July 2016:** Need for Change Document Released

The [Need for Chang](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd514178.pdf)e document highlights specific areas of the original 1996 management plan that the Forest Service have deemed are in need of change. The new management plan will put extra emphasis on these areas.

* **September 2016:** Proposed Action Plan Released

The [Proposed Action Plan](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd518282.pdf) utilizes information gathered from the assessment, review of key findings and identifies proposed actions to be used to develop the Forest Plan.

* **Summer 2017:** Draft Plan and Environmental Impact Statement set to be released

Once the draft plan is released, the Forest Service will open a 45-60 day public comment period. The Forest Service will heavily consider substantive public comments when choosing from alternative management options.

* **Winter 2017/2018:** Final EIS and Draft Plan Decision will be made
* **May 2018:** Period of Public Objection to Final Plan

Prior to approving the preferred alternative, the public may raise issues related to the Plan revision and suggest ways to improve the plan decision.

* **Summer 2018:** Final Decision **“**