



File Code: 1950

Date: March 6, 2009

Dear Forest User:

This letter contains information regarding the proposed Groomer Storage Building at Valley Spur Cross Country Ski Trail on the Munising Ranger District of the Hiawatha National Forest. The proposed storage building would house the grooming equipment currently used to provide the high quality trails system at Valley Spur.

Currently, all of Valley Spurs' grooming equipment are stored outdoors, exposing the equipment to the elements and making maintenance difficult. Most of the equipment is also visible from the lodge and parking area. A new structure would facilitate maintenance, extend the life of the expensive equipment and improve the aesthetics around the lodge and parking area. The proposed storage building would be located close enough to the parking area for convenience, but out of view from the lodge and parking area.

Valley Spur is currently being managed by the Noquemanon Trail Network (NTN) under permit with the Hiawatha National Forest. The proposed grooming equipment storage building would be built using NTN funds.

Description of Proposed Groomer Storage Building:

- 24' x 32' storage building, with two 8' covered exterior storage areas on either side of the building.
- 12' x 12' Garage doors on front and back of building, to offer drive-thru for larger equipment such as the Tucker and tracked vehicle.
- 6' x 7' Roll-up door on front of building for small equipment, such as snowmobiles and attachments.
- Two flue masonry chimney
- One door and one or two windows on either side of the building (under exterior storage area overhang).
- Rough sawn board and batton white-pine siding, painted Forest Service brown
- Standard steel roofing, brown

Public Comment

With this letter, I am initiating the public involvement process required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The 36 CFR 215.5(a)(2) regulations state that, "The Responsible Official shall: ...determine the most effective timing for publishing the legal notice of the proposed action and opportunity to formally comment." Based on the skiing season at Valley Spur, I have determined that this is the most opportune time to receive the most public comments. I have also determined that we are able to provide enough specific information about the proposal and its effects to garner comments at this time. This constitutes notice of opportunity to comment on the Valley Spur Groomer Storage Building Project (36 CFR 215.5).



The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of the legal notice in The Mining Journal, Marquette, Michigan.

You may comment by mail to: Teresa Chase, District Ranger, Attn: Valley Spur Groomer Storage Building, 400 E. Munising Ave., Munising, MI 49862; or by fax to (906) 387-2070.

Send e-mail comments to: comments-eastern-hiawatha-munising@fs.fed.us. Please put “Comments on Valley Spur Groomer Storage Building” in the subject line. Acceptable formats for electronic comments are text or HTML e-mail, and Microsoft Office formats.

Hand deliver comments during office hours: 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday (closed holidays). Oral comments (in person or by telephone) must also be delivered during those hours. Also, comment sheets will be available in the Lodge at Valley Spur. Please hand-deliver or mail these comment sheets to the Munising Office.

If you need additional information or have questions regarding the proposed building, please contact Becky Cain, Project Team Leader at (906) 387-2512, ext. 38, or email at rcain@fs.fed.us, please put “Valley Spur Groomer Storage Building” in the subject line.

Next Step

Comments will be used throughout the analysis and decision process. The most helpful comments are those that are within the scope of the proposed actions, specific to the proposed action, have a direct relationship to the proposed action, and include supporting reasons for me to consider (36 CFR 215.2). Your comments will be used to identify relevant issues, display environmental effects, and/or develop a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action.

This project qualifies for categorical exclusion from documentation in an EIS or EA per 36 CFR 200.6 (e) category 3, approval, modification, or continuation of minor special uses of NFS lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land. All comments received are considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public inspection under the Freedom of Information Act.

The final decision on this project will be subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215 unless no comments expressing concerns (or only supportive comments) are received during the comment period. An appeal may be filed by individuals and organizations that provide comments or otherwise expressed interest in the proposed action during this 30-day notice and comment period.

Sincerely,

TERESA CHASE
District Ranger

Attachments:

Map 1 – General location of proposed building
Sketch of proposed building

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